



# **2013 CENTER FOR ARMY LEADERSHIP ANNUAL SURVEY OF ARMY LEADERSHIP (CASAL): ARMY CIVILIAN LEADERS**

**TECHNICAL REPORT 2014-02**

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**May 2014**

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| REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                             |                                    | Form Approved<br>OMB No. 0704-0188             |                                                        |                                                           |
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| Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. <b>PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                             |                                    |                                                |                                                        |                                                           |
| 1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)<br>30-05-2014                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                             | 2. REPORT TYPE<br>Technical Report |                                                | 3. DATES COVERED (From - To)<br>August 2013 – May 2014 |                                                           |
| 4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE<br><br>2013 Center for Army Leadership Annual Survey of Army Leadership (CASAL): Army Civilian Leaders                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                             |                                    | 5a. CONTRACT NUMBER<br><br>W911S0-11-D-0011    |                                                        |                                                           |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                             |                                    | 5b. GRANT NUMBER                               |                                                        |                                                           |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                             |                                    | 5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER                     |                                                        |                                                           |
| 6. AUTHOR(S)<br>Ryan Riley (ICF International), Josh Hatfield (ICF International), Jon J. Fallesen (CAL) and Katie Gunther (CAL)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                             |                                    | 5d. PROJECT NUMBER                             |                                                        |                                                           |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                             |                                    | 5e. TASK NUMBER DO 0006                        |                                                        |                                                           |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                             |                                    | 5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER                           |                                                        |                                                           |
| 7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)<br>ICF International Cubic Applications, Inc.<br>9300 Lee Highway 426 Delaware, Suite C-3<br>Fairfax, VA Leavenworth, KS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                             |                                    | 8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER       |                                                        |                                                           |
| 9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)<br>Center for Army Leadership<br>Leadership Research, Assessment and Doctrine Division<br>290 Stimson Ave, Unit 4<br>Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                             |                                    | 10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)<br>CAL        |                                                        |                                                           |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                             |                                    | 11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S) 2014-02 |                                                        |                                                           |
| 12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT<br>Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                             |                                    |                                                |                                                        |                                                           |
| 13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES<br>A separate report from the Center for Army Leadership, 2014-01 provides survey findings on Army uniformed leaders.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                             |                                    |                                                |                                                        |                                                           |
| 14. ABSTRACT<br>CASAL is an annual survey sponsored by the Combined Arms Center to assess the quality of Army leadership and leader development. 2013 civilian leader findings are based on responses from 2,006 managers and 2,971 first line supervisors. Getting results, preparing one's self, and stewardship are the most favorably rated competencies from leadership doctrine. Demonstrating expertise, confidence & composure, the Army values, technical knowledge and self-discipline are the highest rated attributes. Areas for improvement include developing subordinates, building effective teams and building trust. Working environments are generally conducive to civilian leaders' abilities to complete their tasks and missions. Civilian leaders report moderate to very high levels of trust in those with whom they work, and levels of commitment among teams continue to be high. Morale showed a sharp decline in 2013 reflecting a challenging period of DoD fiscal uncertainty. Operational job experience is favored as the practice that has the largest impact on civilian leader development. Most who have completed a Civilian Education System course view the quality of the education received as good or very good. Course ratings for improving leadership capabilities show room for improvement. Formal and informal performance counseling continues to occur inconsistently for civilian leaders and most do not have a mentor. Findings are also reported on leader influence, workload stress, distributed learning, the mission command philosophy and satisfaction with military and civilian leadership. |                             |                                    |                                                |                                                        |                                                           |
| 15. SUBJECT TERMS Leadership; Leader Development; Education; Training; Performance Assessment; Trust; Mission Command; Army Civilians; Army Profession; Recommendations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                             |                                    |                                                |                                                        |                                                           |
| 16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                             |                                    | 17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT                     | 18. NUMBER OF PAGES                                    | 19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON                           |
| a. REPORT<br>Unclassified                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | b. ABSTRACT<br>Unclassified | c. THIS PAGE<br>Unclassified       | Unlimited                                      | 78                                                     | Jon J. Fallesen                                           |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                             |                                    |                                                |                                                        | 19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code)<br>913-758-3160 |



# **2013 Center for Army Leadership Annual Survey of Army Leadership (CASAL): Army Civilian Leaders Executive Summary**

## **Purpose**

The Center for Army Leadership (CAL) conducts an Annual Survey of Army Leadership (CASAL) on the quality of Army leadership activities and the effectiveness of leader development experiences. Since 2009, survey administration has also included Department of the Army civilians. CASAL has been a dependable source to inform senior leaders about the level of leader quality and any upward or downward trends. The information affords leaders the option to make course corrections or take advantage of strengths and opportunities. Other stakeholders and individuals have access to feedback specific to their interests.

## **Method**

Standard scientific approaches are used for survey development, sampling, data collection and analysis. Survey items are chosen based on past usage, input from stake-holders and development of new issues. The 2013 data collection extended from November 14 through December 10, 2013. CASAL was administered to 17,762 Army civilians, of which 5,649 participated for a response rate of 31.8%. A successive screening approach to identify civilians in leadership positions resulted in a final sample of 2,006 managers and 2,971 first line supervisors. Sampling practices produced results with a margin of error of +/-1.3% represented for the 39,218 Army civilian managers and supervisors represented in the population. Data analysis includes assessment of percentages by supervisory level, analysis of trends, comparisons across experience and demographics, coding of short-answer responses, correlations and regressions. Secondary source data are consulted to check and clarify results. This report discusses Army civilian leader findings and serves as a supporting document to the technical report of CASAL main findings (Riley, Hatfield, Freeman, Fallesen, & Gunther, 2014).

## **Summary of Civilian Leader Findings**

For most items, percentages are used to summarize the level of responses and show trends across time. As a starting point, results are considered favorable if the positive response choices (e.g., effective plus very effective) sum to 67% or greater. Unfavorable levels are considered to be negative categories with 20% or more responses. Across five years of CASAL several common patterns have emerged as a backdrop to understand specific findings.

- Favorability tends to increase with the supervisory level and length of service of the respondent.
- Civilian leader ratings for their superiors' effectiveness tend to be less favorable than ratings by uniformed leaders.
- The data reflect that some concepts and requirements assessed by CASAL are more relevant to Soldiers and are less relevant to Army civilian leaders.

The following sections provide summaries of the key topics assessed for Army civilian leaders.

### Working Environments

Civilian leaders are positive about the environment in which they work. About four-fifths of managers and first line supervisors have favorable attitudes towards organizational factors such as the ability of their unit/organization to perform its mission, effective collaboration of team members and treating one another with respect.

A less favorable indicator is that one in three civilian leaders report workload stress is a serious problem. While stress has a verifiable negative impact on leader well-being and work quality, seeking help for stress-related problems is better accepted and encouraged than it was in 2011.

### Satisfaction and Commitment

Civilian leaders demonstrate strong commitment to their teams and immediate work groups because of a sense of personal loyalty, and agree their assigned duties are important to their unit or organization. Two out of three civilian leaders feel informed about decisions that affect their work responsibilities, a finding that is trending upward in recent years.

Less than half of civilian leaders report high morale while one in four reports low morale. These results show a marked decline in morale compared to previous years. The change is undoubtedly linked to the fiscal climate of the federal government and especially the Department of Defense. In 2013, Army civilians experienced pay and hiring freezes, budgetary constraints and furloughs. Career satisfaction also shows a decline from previous years, from a high of 88% in 2009 to 74% in 2013. The decline of satisfied civilian leaders accompanies a corresponding decline in satisfaction among civilian employees. The decreases can create added challenges for leaders to address employee engagement and any declines in work quality.

### Leadership

Around 70% of managers and first line supervisors rate their superiors, peers and subordinates as effective or very effective leaders. Since 2009, no more than 10% of civilian leaders have rated their peers or their subordinates as ineffective leaders, and no more than 17% of civilian leaders have rated their superiors as ineffective.

Civilian leaders are rated favorably by subordinate supervisors and managers across all leadership attributes (ADRP 6-22). The highest rated attributes are *Expertise in Primary Duties*, *Confidence & Composure*, the *Army Values*, *Technical Knowledge* and *Self-Discipline*. The lowest rated attributes are *Total Fitness* (physical, health, psychological, spiritual, behavioral and social), *Interpersonal Tact* and *Innovation*. The ratings of leadership competencies are moderate to strong. Civilian leaders are rated most favorably in behaviors such as *Getting Results*, *Preparing Oneself*, *Stewardship of the Profession*, developing a quick understanding of complex

situations and setting the standard for integrity and character. Developing subordinates is a persistent area for improvement for both civilian and uniformed leaders. Other areas falling below a threshold of two-thirds favorable responses include building effective teams (61%), building trust (63%), leading by example (64%) and creating a positive environment (64%).

Results also confirm that the demonstration of effective leadership attributes and competencies by civilian leaders makes a significant and positive difference to organizational and individual outcomes, such as team cohesion, individual motivation, work quality, commitment and morale.

### Influence

Influence is at the core of the Army's definition of leadership. More leaders use methods of influence to gain commitment from others compared to leaders who use methods that require compliance. More than 69% of civilian leaders effectively demonstrate *rational persuasion, collaboration, apprising, legitimating and participation*. Fewer leaders are rated effective at using *exchange* (54%) and *inspirational appeals* (57%).

### Trust

Conceptually, trust is the basis for effective relationships between leaders and those they influence. From 80% to over 90% of civilian leaders hold moderate, high or very high trust in their subordinates, peers and superiors. Ratings of trust in one's immediate superiors are strongly associated with positive ratings of their superior's *values, empathy, getting results* and *building trust*. Civilian leader trust-building is positively associated with subordinate motivation, work quality, commitment and morale. Levels of trust are lower for respondents' superiors two levels up; reasons given include poor communication, integrity issues, and lack of presence or interaction. CASAL results show that trust is high in organizations with climates that empower its members to make decisions pertaining to their duties, allow and encourage learning from honest mistakes, and uphold standards (e.g., professional bearing, adherence to regulations).

### Mission Command

About two-thirds of respondents assessed their civilian leaders as effective at demonstrating behaviors reflecting the principles of mission command. Favorable implementation of mission command is also indicated by ratings that civilian subordinates are enabled to determine how best to accomplish their work and that they are encouraged to learn from honest mistakes. Civilian leaders report less familiarity with mission command doctrine compared to uniformed leaders.

## Civilian Leader Development

Operational job experiences continue to be the most favored (74% rating it effective) of the three leader development domains. This is followed by the self-development and institutional domains. Consistent with past assessments, informal practices (such as opportunities to lead others and on-the-job training) are viewed as having the largest positive impact on the respondents' development as leaders.

Civilian leader engagement in their subordinates' development continues to show room for improvement. Fifty-four percent of civilian leaders are rated effective at developing their subordinates and 46% are rated effective at creating or calling attention to leader development opportunities. Performance counseling (formal and informal) occurs inconsistently and the perceived impact on development remains low. About one in four civilian leaders (27%) receive counseling only at rating time, while 14% indicate they never or almost never receive it. From 20% to 32% of managers and first line supervisors indicate their immediate superior does not take time to talk with them about how their work is going, how to improve their duty performance, or what they should do to prepare for future positions. Less than one-third of civilian leaders currently have a mentor (29%); twice as many (62%) indicate they provide mentoring to others. Of those who receive mentoring, 70% rate it as having a large or great positive impact on their development.

## Civilian Education System (CES)

Sixty-four percent of the surveyed managers and first line supervisors have completed a Civilian Education System (CES) course at some point in their Army career, leaving one in three who have not. About half of civilian leaders (52%) rate institutional courses as effective or very effective in developing them for higher levels of leadership or responsibility. Many graduates rate the quality of the education they received in CES as good or very good (72%). Most civilian leaders agree course content was up to date with the current operating environment, though courses receive moderate ratings in their effectiveness for improving leadership (54% rating effective or very effective). Three-fourths of CES resident course graduates rate instructors effective at modeling doctrinal leadership and providing effective leadership feedback to learners. The level of rigor or challenge posed by all courses shows room for improvement, particularly courses offered entirely via distributed learning (DL). The Supervisor Development Course (SDC) is viewed as relevant to the current duties of civilian and uniformed supervisors who complete it, though less than half rate the course effective at improving leadership. The two courses that fall below a two-thirds threshold of favorable response on the relevancy of course content to one's current job are the Foundation Course and the Advanced Course.

## Leader Development Programs

The 2013 CASAL examined five leader development programs available to Army civilians including the Army profession, career maps, 360° assessments, Army Career Tracker and Army Training Network.



Ninety-three percent of civilian leaders report having some or greater understanding of the essential characteristics of the Army Profession. Fewer (19% of managers, 14% of first line supervisors) were aware of the *America's Army – Our Profession* (AA-OP) program. Of the 8% of civilian leaders who indicated that their organization conducted AA-OP training, 41% reported it had a moderate, large or great impact on their unit/organization.

One in four civilian leaders have accessed and used a civilian career map. Of users, about half (53%) indicate they have been effective or very effective in helping to plan career development.

Sixteen percent of civilian leaders reported having been assessed through the Multi-Source Assessment and Feedback (MSAF) program. Three out of four assessed civilians indicate the experience was effective at increasing their awareness of their strengths and developmental needs, and half rate it effective for improving their unit or organization. Civilian leader usage of the leadership training materials offered in the Virtual Improvement Center (VIC) continues to be low (3%).

Usage of the Army Career Tracker (ACT) has increased steadily since 2011. Forty-two percent of civilian leaders have accessed and used ACT, and of these, 48% rate it effective at providing a single point of access to career development information.

Twenty-two percent of civilian leaders have used the Army Training Network (ATN), which they rate as effective at providing resources for planning and executing self-development (61%), unit training (59%), and unit leader development (51%).

### Distributed Learning (DL)

CASAL surveyed the perceptions that civilian leaders have about their – and their subordinates' – use of required DL. Access to DL is not viewed as a problem for most civilian leaders, as 80% of managers and 77% of first line supervisors indicate it is sufficient. However, time available for required DL during the duty day is an issue for many – only 38% agree they have sufficient opportunity to complete required DL during duty time, while 45% indicate they do not have time. Two out of three civilian leaders completed required DL themselves in the previous month with the average time being nine hours. Only 43% of civilian leaders agree that DL enhances subordinates' abilities to perform their duties.

### **Conclusions**

Army civilian managers and first line supervisors hold favorable attitudes toward climate and commitment; however, there are indications of problems with workload stress. The decline in morale among civilian leaders should continue to be monitored. The considerable decline in the percentage of civilian leaders who are satisfied with their careers is a concern. A majority of the assessed areas of leadership are rated favorably with notable and persistent exceptions – developing subordinates, building trust and building effective teams. Nearly two in ten civilian

leaders do not receive formal or informal performance counseling, three in ten do not receive feedback on job performance, and seven in ten report having no mentor.

Informal leader development practices and domains are preferred over formal leader development activities. Consistent with findings for uniformed leaders, universal leader development programs, like training on the profession, Multi-Source Assessment and Feedback, civilian career maps, Army Career Tracker and Army Training Network have value to many leaders but generally are under-subscribed. Less than half of civilian leaders report that required distributed learning improves their subordinates' abilities to perform their duties. Courses within the Civilian Education System (CES) are rated favorably for the quality of education, but are rated less highly on challenge and leadership improvement.

The decline since 2009 in the number of civilian leaders satisfied with their careers and the increase in reports of workload stress are not direct issues of leadership or leader development quality. However, these trends do represent unfavorable perceptions by leaders that can affect their work and that of their subordinates. Slight declines of 3% in three leader attributes – resilience, service ethos and total fitness – while other leader attributes are generally increasing, provide additional indication that the effects of stress are being felt by more civilian leaders. Given that many leaders are not supported effectively by development there may be additional impacts, such as decreased engagement, work quality, trust and cohesion. While these connections are speculative, they provide insight into weak signals that could portend concerns for Army civilian leaders.

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**2013 Center for Army Leadership  
Annual Survey of Army Leadership (CASAL):  
Army Civilian Leaders**

**Introduction**

This report discusses Army civilian leader results of the 2013 CASAL, and is meant to serve as a supporting document to the technical report of main findings (Riley, Hatfield, Freeman, Fallesen, & Gunther, 2014). In 2005, CASAL was established by the Center for Army Leadership (CAL), Combined Arms Center (CAC), to assess and track trends of leader perceptions on leader development, the quality of leadership, and the contribution of leadership to mission accomplishment. Since fall 2009, survey administration has also included Department of the Army civilians. The 2013 CASAL was administered to 17,762 Army civilians, of which 5,649 participated for a response rate of 32% and an overall margin of error of +/-1.3%. Findings for Army civilian leaders are addressed in three areas:

- Quality of Leadership
- Climate and Situational Factors within the Working Environment
- Quality of Leader Development.

**Demographics**

The sample of Army civilian leaders that responded to the 2013 CASAL approximated the Army civilian workforce with regard to gender and ethnic origin (Office of the Assistant G-1 for Civilian Personnel, 2013). The reported education level of survey respondents exceeded the levels of the DoD workforce, with 30% holding bachelor degrees (compared to 24% of population) and 38% holding graduate or professional degrees (compared to 12% of population) (Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service, 2012).

Sixty percent of the respondent sample (63% of managers; 59% of first line supervisors) previously served in the military. The average tenure of civilians in their current organization was 135 months; average time in current position was 64 months; average time in current grade or pay level was 75 months; and average time reporting to current leader or supervisor was 35 months.

Further, there were two points at the beginning of the survey that required participants to indicate whether or not they were in a position represented by a bargaining unit and/or union. Data were not collected from participants who indicated bargaining unit and union membership

because the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute excludes supervisors from being included in a Federal sector bargaining unit.

### Determination of Supervisory Status

The 2013 CASAL sampling plan targeted Army civilian leaders, supervisors and managers. A random sample of participants was drawn from a current population database of all Army civilians based on a supervisory status variable that excluded non-supervisory employees. Prior to conducting data analysis, CASAL determinations of supervisory status relied on a combination of self-reported data (i.e., position, GS level, supervisory responsibilities) to determine civilian supervisory cohort membership. Similar to previous years, a multi-step process that examined consistency of responses on survey items was used.

A civilian leader is defined as an Army civilian who holds direct supervisory responsibility for other Army civilians and/or uniformed personnel. For the purposes of this research, civilian leaders are classified into one of two groups: managers or first line supervisors. To be included in one of the supervisory cohorts, civilian respondents had to respond 'yes' that they directly supervised subordinates (either civilian or uniformed personnel or both) and provide the number of direct report subordinates they supervised (greater than zero). Respondents who also indicated their direct report subordinates were supervisors themselves were classified as managers, while those who indicated their subordinates were not supervisors were classified as first line supervisors. As a final determining factor, an item on the survey asked respondents to select a response that best represented their current position. These responses included short definitions of supervisory responsibilities, and were used to classify any remaining respondents not yet classified due to missing data for the other items. The result of this successive screening approach defined a cohort of civilian leaders for whom data were included in the analyses discussed in this report.

- Managers – supervise direct reports who are also supervisors (N = 2,006)
- First line supervisors – supervise employees that are non-supervisors (N = 2,971)

### Data Analysis Methods

CASAL includes items that capture both quantitative (select choice) and qualitative (short answer) responses. Most multiple choice items ask participants to respond on a scale of 1-5, where 5 is the most favorable (e.g., very effective, strongly agree) and 1 is the least favorable (e.g., very ineffective, strongly disagree), with a neutral middle point (3). To ease the interpretation of results, the five point response categories are collapsed into three point scales. For example, responses of '5' (strongly agree) and '4' (agree) are collapsed and reported

as the percentage of participants who “agree or strongly agree.” Thus, most charts in this report display the percentage of favorable, neutral and unfavorable responses for an item or rank group. The assessment of leadership in this report focuses on civilian respondents’ ratings of other civilians leaders. A section on satisfaction with military and civilian leadership briefly covers the ratings of military members whose immediate superior was an Army civilian and civilians whose immediate superior was a military leader.

A useful rule of thumb in analyzing CASAL data is the two-thirds favorability threshold, whereby item results that receive two-thirds or more favorable response (e.g., 67% agreement or effectiveness) are considered positive. Items where favorable response falls below this threshold and/or receive 20% or more unfavorable response are considered areas for improvement. Similarly, a 6% difference in results between years is a useful guideline for identifying meaningful change over time. While these rules of thumb may be applied as general guidelines to data interpretation, each item warrants its own consideration. Several factors impact the interpretation of item favorability and change, including the sampling error for each sub-group, cohort and component being examined, and in some cases, variation in the way items are worded between years. Additional statistical analyses are performed to aid in the interpretation of the survey domains and to draw out higher level meaning across items.

### Organization of Findings

Findings on the quality of leadership, climate and situational factors within the working environment, and civilian leader development include consideration of Army civilian leader respondents, a cohort determined in the data through the screening process described above. For ease of interpretation, item findings are generally presented as percentages of favorable, neutral, and unfavorable ratings. Within each sub-section of this report, key findings are highlighted in text and summarized in call-out boxes. Each major section of the report ends with a short summary that provides a recap of the most important findings.

Where appropriate, trend comparisons are made to CASAL findings from past years (Riley & Fallesen, 2013; Riley, Conrad, & Keller-Glaze, 2012; Riley, Keller-Glaze, & Steele, 2011; Riley & Steele, 2010). Comparisons to CASAL results pertaining to attitudes, opinions and ratings of active duty uniformed leaders are made when useful or for confirmation (Riley et al., 2014). Statistically significant differences between these groups, where relevant, are referenced in footnotes throughout this report. CASAL findings are also supplemented with results from other surveys that have assessed similar topic areas. Two recent survey initiatives that assessed factors common to CASAL are the 2013 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (United States Office of Personnel Management) and the 2013 Army Civilian Attitude Survey (Deputy Chief of Staff, G1). Results of these surveys are discussed where applicable.

## **1. Quality of Leadership**

This section discusses CASAL results for several perspectives of leadership performance and quality. The quality of civilian leadership was assessed through ratings of effectiveness for superiors, peers and subordinates as leaders; overall levels of satisfaction with civilian and military leadership; and ratings for one's immediate superior or supervisor. Leadership performance was examined through existing doctrinal frameworks including the Army core leader competencies and the leader attributes. A new area of focus for CASAL is the effective use of influence methods by civilian leaders.

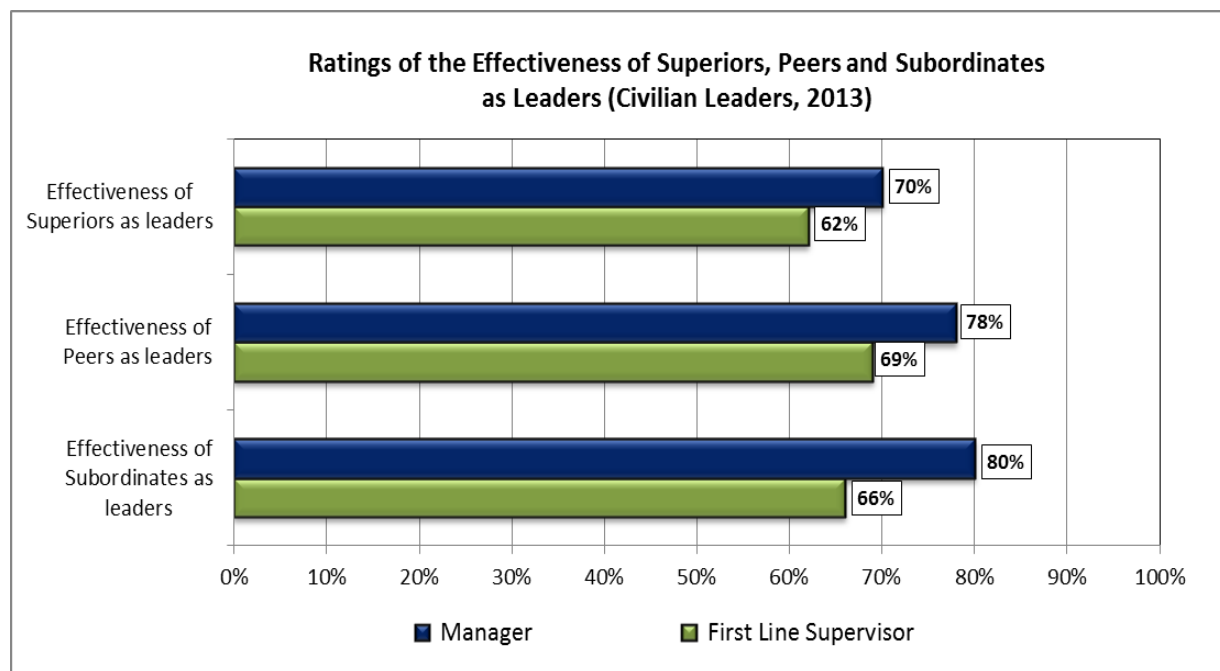
### **1.1 Perceptions of Leader Quality**

CASAL has consistently captured favorable perceptions regarding the quality of leadership in the Army. The 2013 survey found that a majority of Army civilian leaders rate their superiors, peers and subordinates as effective leaders (see Figure 1). A larger percentage of managers rate those with whom they work as effective leaders than do first line supervisors. The disparity in favorable ratings between these cohorts is a pattern consistent with past CASAL results.

- Seventy percent of managers rate their superiors as effective leaders, compared to 62% of first line supervisors.
- A majority of managers and first line supervisors view their peers as effective leaders (78% and 69%, respectively).
- Eighty percent of managers rate their subordinates as effective leaders, compared to 66% of first line supervisors. These differences are not unexpected as first line supervisors oversee non-supervisory civilian employees that are less likely to hold formal leadership responsibilities.
- Overall, small percentages of civilian leaders rate their peers (7%) and subordinates (6%) as ineffective leaders. A slightly larger percentage of managers and first line supervisors rate their superiors as ineffective leaders (14% and 19%, respectively).



**Figure 1. Effectiveness Ratings of Superiors, Peers and Subordinates as Leaders.**



### Satisfaction with Military and Civilian Leadership

The 2013 CASAL sought to identify new insights regarding satisfaction with the quality of leadership in units and organizations, specifically with regard to cross-cohort perceptions (i.e., uniformed respondent satisfaction with Army civilian leadership and vice versa). Overall, 65% of civilian leaders are satisfied with the quality of military leadership in their current organization, while about one-sixth (17%) are dissatisfied. Army uniformed respondents show comparable levels of satisfaction with the military leadership in their unit or organization (65% satisfied; 18% dissatisfied). Smaller percentages of both civilian (61%) and AC uniformed respondents (57%) are satisfied with the quality of the civilian leadership in their current organization. Dissatisfaction with either type of leadership is within 3% for civilians and within 1% for uniformed respondents (see Table 1).

**Table 1. Satisfaction with the Quality of Military and Civilian Leadership in the Army.**

| CASAL Respondents                                    | Quality of Military Leadership in Current Unit/Organization | Quality of Civilian Leadership in Current Unit/Organization |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Active Duty Uniformed Cohort                         | 65% Satisfied                                               | 57% Satisfied                                               |
|                                                      | 18% Dissatisfied                                            | 19% Dissatisfied                                            |
| Army Civilians (Managers and First Line Supervisors) | 65% Satisfied                                               | 61% Satisfied                                               |
|                                                      | 17% Dissatisfied                                            | 20% Dissatisfied                                            |

Several multiple regression analyses<sup>1</sup> were conducted to determine the factors that significantly explain levels of satisfaction with military leadership and civilian leadership in units and organizations. Attitudes regarding the current working environment and perceptions of leadership quality within units and organizations were examined to determine what impact, if any, these factors have in reported levels of satisfaction for both military leadership and civilian leadership.

Results of these analyses show that the factors examined (e.g., characteristics of working environments, quality of leaders in the unit, respondents' current morale) explain a significant amount of variance in ratings of satisfaction for both civilian and military leadership. Further, these factors explain more variance for within-group ratings of satisfaction with leadership (i.e., civilian respondents' satisfaction with civilian leadership,  $R^2 = .65, p < .001$ ) compared to cross-group ratings of satisfaction (i.e., civilian respondents' satisfaction with military leadership,  $R^2 = .43, p < .001$ ). This finding also extends to uniformed respondents; within-group rating ( $R^2 = .73, p < .001$ ) compared to cross-group ratings ( $R^2 = .35, p < .001$ ). These findings suggest that both civilian and uniformed leader satisfaction in the quality of leadership across cohorts is influenced by other factors not examined by CASAL.

Results of the 2013 Army Civilian Attitude Survey provide additional indicators of civilian leader satisfaction with the quality of leadership in Army organizations. The survey found that while 64% of civilian supervisors agreed they have a high level of respect for their organization's senior leaders, only about half (51%) indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with policies and practices of their senior leaders. Further, two-thirds (68%) agreed that their organization's leaders maintain high standards of honesty and integrity while just over half (52%) agreed that in their organization, leaders generate high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce (Civilian Personnel Evaluation Agency, 2013).

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<sup>1</sup> Multiple regression analyses were conducted using the enter method and examined the following variables to determine their impact on levels of satisfaction with the quality of military and civilian leadership: agreement that members of unit/organization are committed to performing at a high level; agreement that members of unit/organization are allowed and encouraged to learn from honest mistakes; agreement that unit members are empowered to make decisions pertaining to performance of their duties; agreement that members of unit/organization work collaboratively to achieve results; agreement that standards are upheld; Disagreement that discipline is a problem in the unit/organization; agreement that senior leaders in unit would take action to address an ethical violation, if reported; overall level of trust among unit members; severity of stress from a high workload; effectiveness of peers as leaders; effectiveness of superiors as leaders; respondent's current level of morale; and respondent's agreement he/she is committed to team or immediate work unit due to sense of personal loyalty.

## Civilian Leader Effectiveness

At a more specific level, CASAL results show that a majority of civilian leaders with civilian supervisors<sup>2</sup> hold favorable perceptions about their effectiveness as a leader. As a broad measure, two-thirds of civilian leaders (65%) agree or strongly agree their immediate superior is an effective leader, while 17% disagree. Further, 57% rate their immediate superior as 'best, among the best, or a high performer' compared to other leaders in a similar grade or position; 18% rate their superior as 'worst, among the worst, or a marginal performer' compared to others. The results of both of these indices of immediate superior effectiveness show no change since 2012.

Results of the 2013 Army Civilian Attitude Survey also support CASAL findings on leader effectiveness. The survey found that 77% of civilian supervisors agreed or strongly agreed that overall, their immediate supervisor/team leader was doing a good job. Further, 68% agreed the manager above their immediate supervisor was doing a good job (Civilian Personnel Evaluation Agency, 2013).

CASAL results show strong positive relationships between perceptions of immediate superior effectiveness and several subordinate and team outcomes. Civilian leaders who view their immediate superior as effective also tend to indicate that their superior has had a positive impact on team cohesion ( $r = .82$ ), team discipline ( $r = .79$ ), subordinate motivation ( $r = .79$ ) and subordinate commitment ( $r = .72$ ). Leadership quality is further evidenced through the percentage of civilian leaders rated effective in demonstrating the core leader competencies, the leader attributes, and various other leadership behaviors. Discussions on Army leader performance across the doctrinal competencies and attributes are presented in the following sections.

### **1.2 Leadership Requirements Model**

CASAL serves as the Army's benchmark in assessing leader effectiveness on the core leader competencies and attributes described in the Leadership Requirements Model (ADRP 6-22). Within the 2013 CASAL, 77% of civilian leaders indicated their immediate superior or supervisor is an Army civilian (23% indicated they report to a uniformed leader). This section presents findings on civilian leader effectiveness in demonstrating doctrinal competencies and attributes

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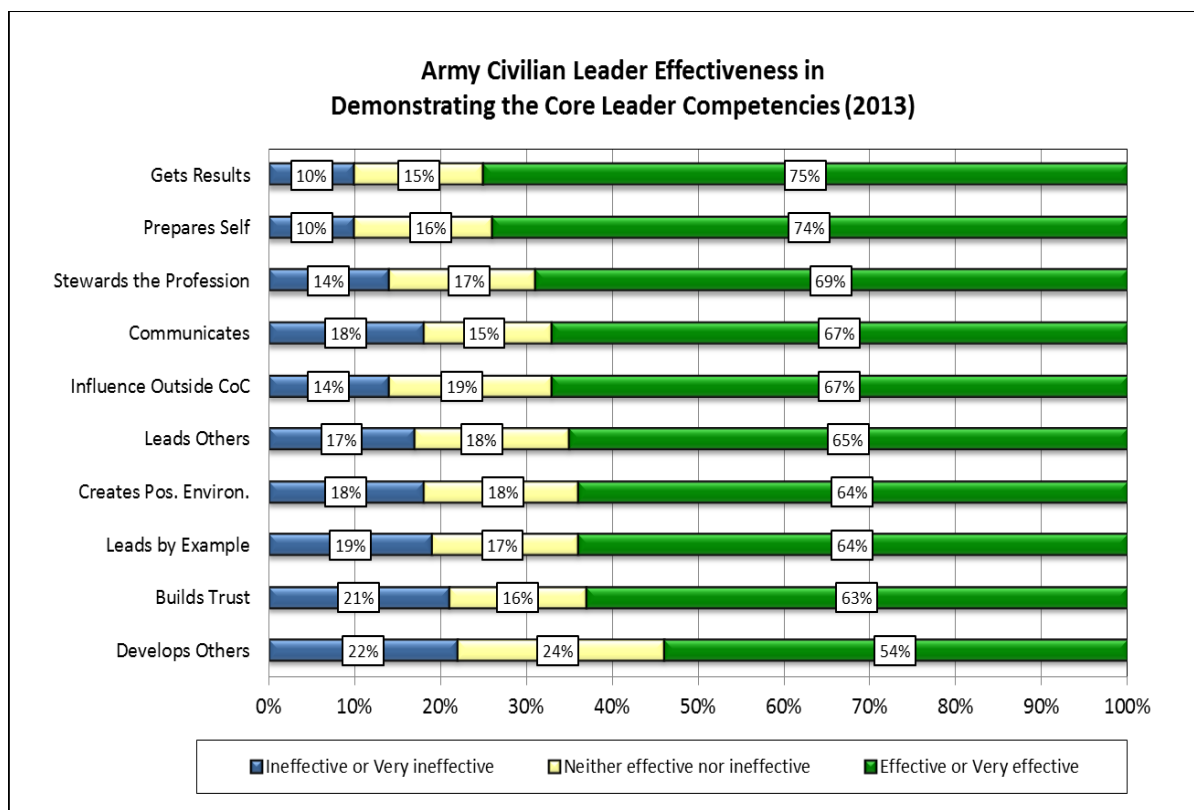
<sup>2</sup> CASAL data show fewer instances of civilian leaders reporting to a uniformed leader supervisor (n=987; 23% of civilians) and vice versa (n=583; 6% of uniformed leaders). Specific results for these working relationships are not included in this discussion.

and identifies strengths and areas for improvement for civilian leaders. Comparisons to ratings of uniformed leader effectiveness on the competencies and attributes are also made.

### Core Leader Competencies

Between 54% and 75% of civilian leaders rate their civilian immediate superior effective or very effective on the ten core leader competencies (see Figure 2). *Gets Results* (75%) and *Prepares Self* (75%) are the competencies in which civilian leaders are rated effective by the largest percentage of subordinates, a consistent trend observed in CASAL results since first assessed in 2009. *Develops Others* is the competency consistently rated the lowest and is the area most in need of improvement for both civilian and uniformed leaders.

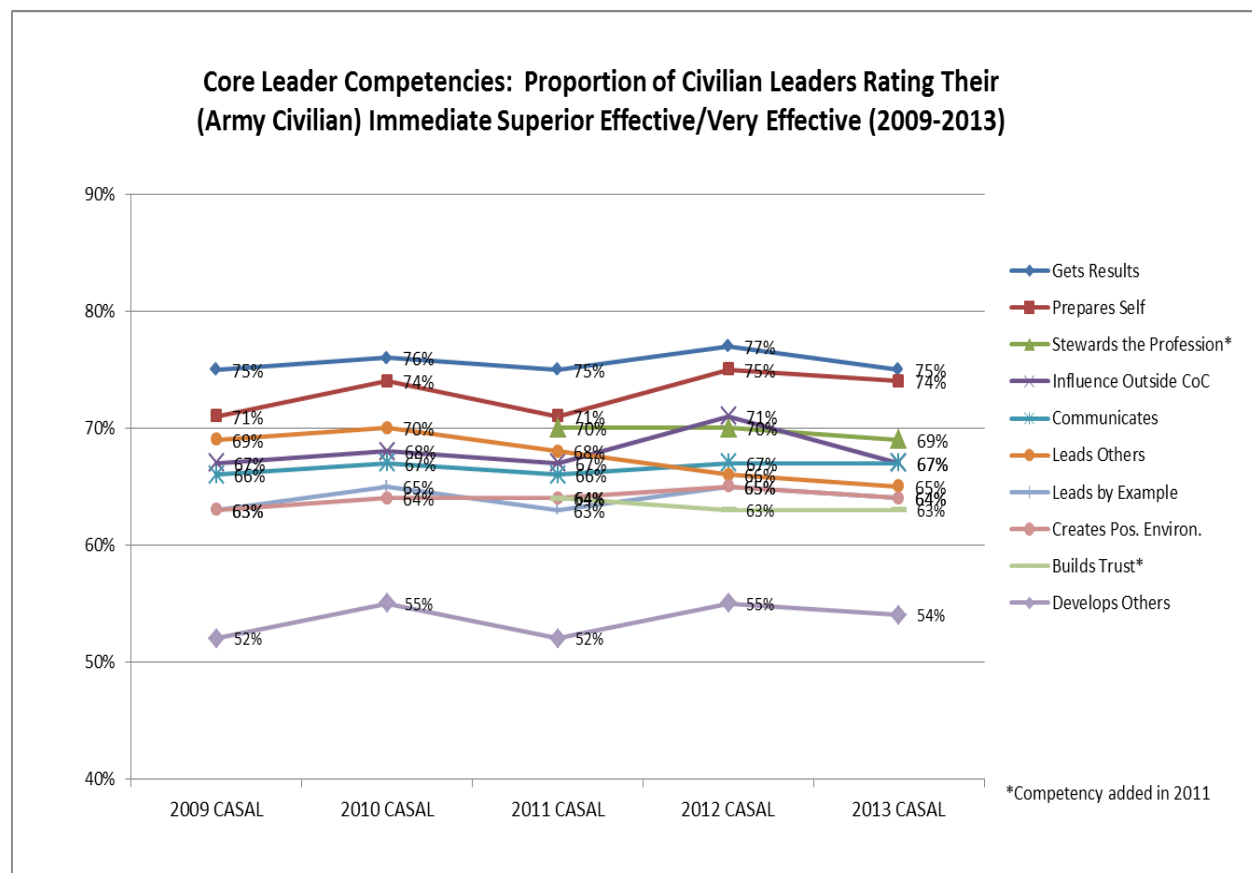
**Figure 2. Army Civilian Leader Effectiveness on the Core Leader Competencies.**



Trend comparisons to previous CASAL results show that civilian leader effectiveness in demonstrating the core leader competencies has remained generally steady. In 2013, the percentage of effective ratings for most competencies remain within 1-3% of results observed in prior years, with few exceptions. Ratings for the competency *Extends Influence Outside the Chain of Command* shows an increase of 4% in 2012 (71% effective) while results from 2009 to 2011 and 2013 are consistently within 1% (67-68% effective) for this competency. Figure 3

displays CASAL findings on civilian leader effectiveness in demonstrating the competencies from 2009 to 2013.

**Figure 3. Comparison of Army Civilian Leader Effectiveness in Demonstrating the Core Leader Competencies from 2009 to 2013.**

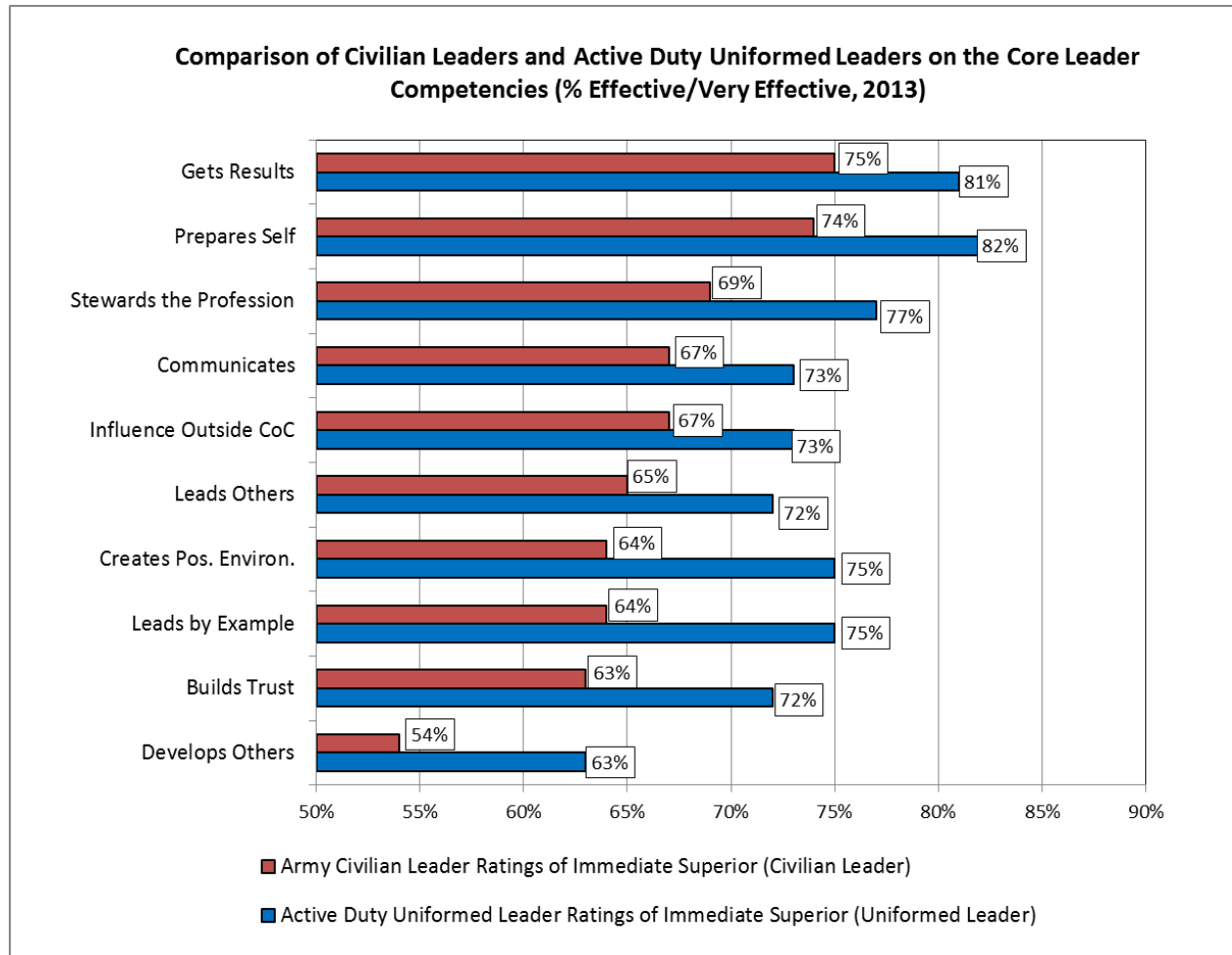


The relative rank ordering of competencies from most to least favorable is generally consistent between ratings for Army civilian leaders (by civilian subordinate leaders; n=3,225) and active duty uniformed leaders (by uniformed subordinate leaders; n=9,036). In other words, the strengths and areas for improvement do not tend to differ for civilian leaders and uniformed leaders. Figure 4 displays results of the 2013 CASAL for each of these cohorts. Overall, ratings for uniformed leaders show greater favorability on the competencies when compared to ratings for civilian leaders, a trend that has been observed in each year of CASAL. The top three competencies and bottom two competencies (by percentage of effective/very effective ratings) are the same for uniformed leaders and civilian leaders. An observed difference for civilian leaders in the

*Gets Results, Prepares Self and Stewards the Profession* are the highest rated competencies. *Develops Others* is the lowest competency and continues to show room for improvement.

relative ordering of competencies is that *Creates a Positive Environment* and *Leads by Example*<sup>3</sup> fall relatively lower in the list than the other ‘middle ground’ competencies (i.e., *Communicates*, *Extends Influence Outside the Chain of Command*, *Leads Others*).

**Figure 4. Comparison of Army Civilian and Active Duty Uniformed Leaders on the Core Leader Competencies (% Effective/Very Effective, 2013).**



### Leader Attributes

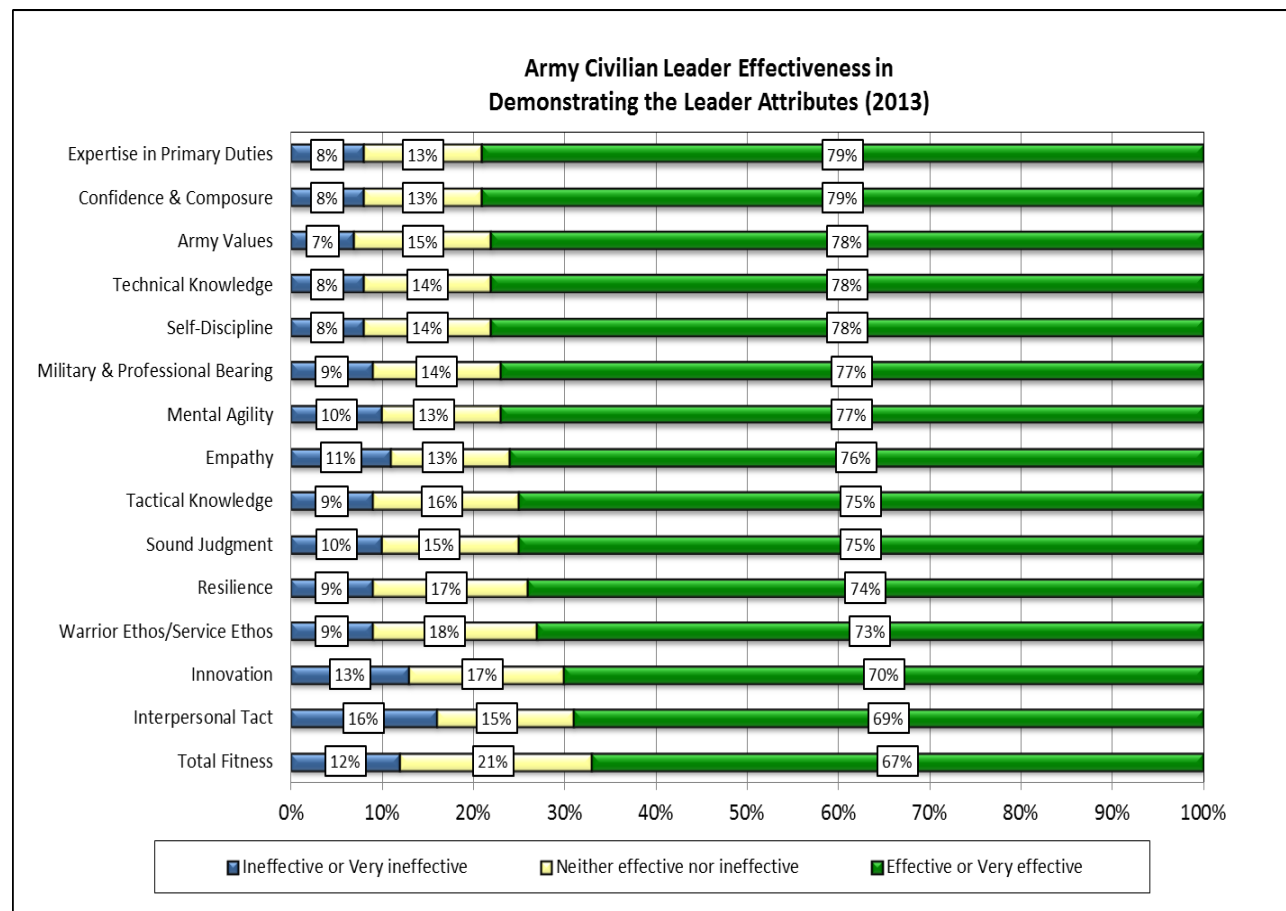
Between 67% and 79% of civilian leaders rate their civilian immediate superior effective or very effective on the leader attributes (see Figure 5). These results are positive and this represents a consistent trend across CASAL administrations. In 2013, the attributes in which the largest

<sup>3</sup> The percentages of civilian leaders rated effective/very effective at the competencies ‘Creates a Positive Environment’ (64%) and ‘Leads by Example’ (64%) are significantly lower than ratings for active duty uniformed leaders.

percentage of civilian leaders rate their Army civilian immediate superior effective or very effective are *Expertise in Primary Duties* (79%), *Confidence & Composure* (79%), the *Army Values* (78%), *Technical Knowledge* (78%) and *Self-Discipline* (78%). The three lowest-rated attributes for civilian leaders are *Innovation* (70%), *Interpersonal Tact* (69%) and *Total Fitness* (67%).

Large percentages of civilian leaders are rated effective in demonstrating the leader attributes. However, *Total Fitness*, *Interpersonal tact* and *Innovation* are rated the lowest.

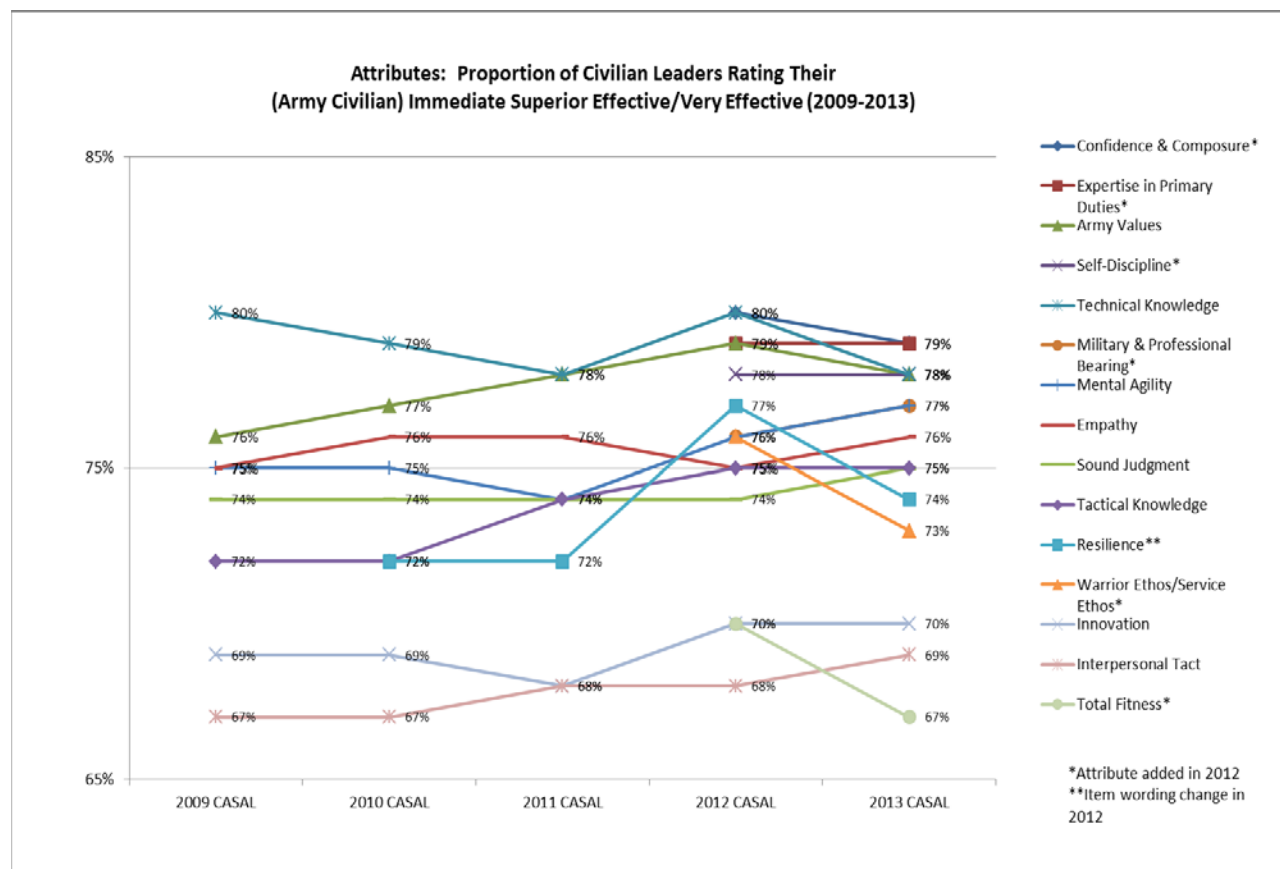
**Figure 5. Army Civilian Leader Effectiveness on the Leader Attributes.**



Starting in 2012, CASAL broadened the assessment of the leader attributes to reflect the revised leadership requirements model presented in ADRP 6-22. Thus, the 2013 CASAL is the first year in which trend comparisons may be examined for several of the attributes. In 2013, the percentage of effective ratings for most attributes remained within 1-2% of the results observed in 2012. There were three exceptions. Ratings for civilian leader effectiveness in demonstrating the *Warrior Ethos/Service Ethos* and *Total Fitness* each declined by 3%. Ratings for the attribute *Resilience* show an increase in 2012 (77% effective) while results from 2009 to

2011 and 2013 are consistently within 2% (72-74% effective). Figure 6 displays CASAL findings on civilian leader effectiveness in demonstrating the attributes from 2009 to 2013.

**Figure 6. Comparison of Army Civilian Leader Effectiveness in demonstrating the Leader Attributes from 2009 to 2013.**

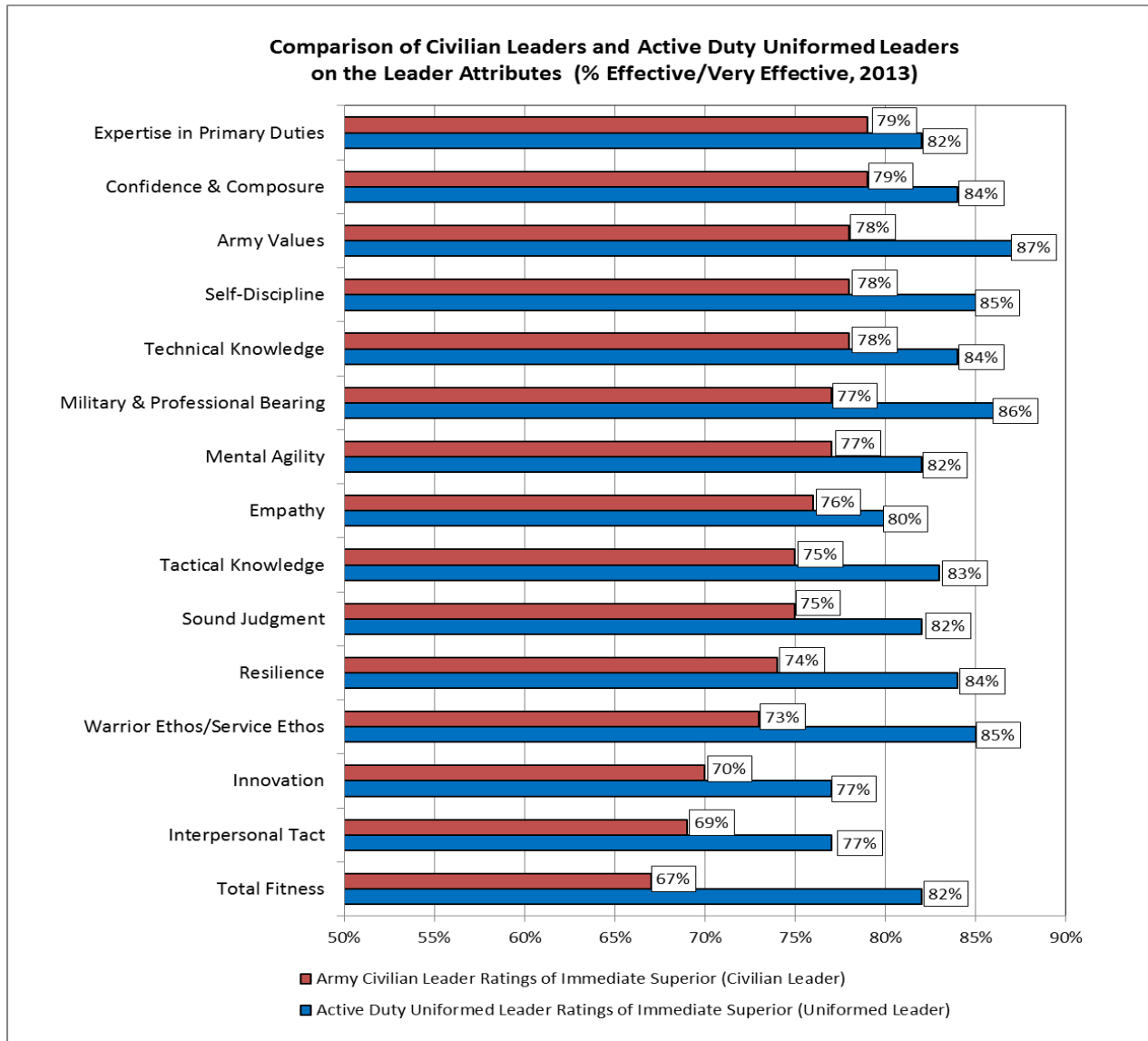


Again, ratings for uniformed leaders show greater favorability across the attributes when compared to ratings for civilian leaders (See Figure 7) and there are similarities between these cohorts in terms of the relative rank ordering of the attributes. The *Army Values* and *Self-Discipline* are among the highest rated attributes while *Innovation* and *Interpersonal Tact* are among the lowest rated. There are also notable differences between these cohorts. Civilian leaders are rated most favorably at demonstrating *Expertise* and *Confidence & Composure*, while ratings for *Military & Professional Bearing*, *Warrior Ethos/Service Ethos*, and *Total Fitness* are uniquely high for uniformed leaders.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The percentages of civilian leaders rated effective/very effective at demonstrating the Warrior Ethos/Service Ethos (73%) and Total Fitness (67%) are significantly lower than ratings for active duty uniformed leaders.



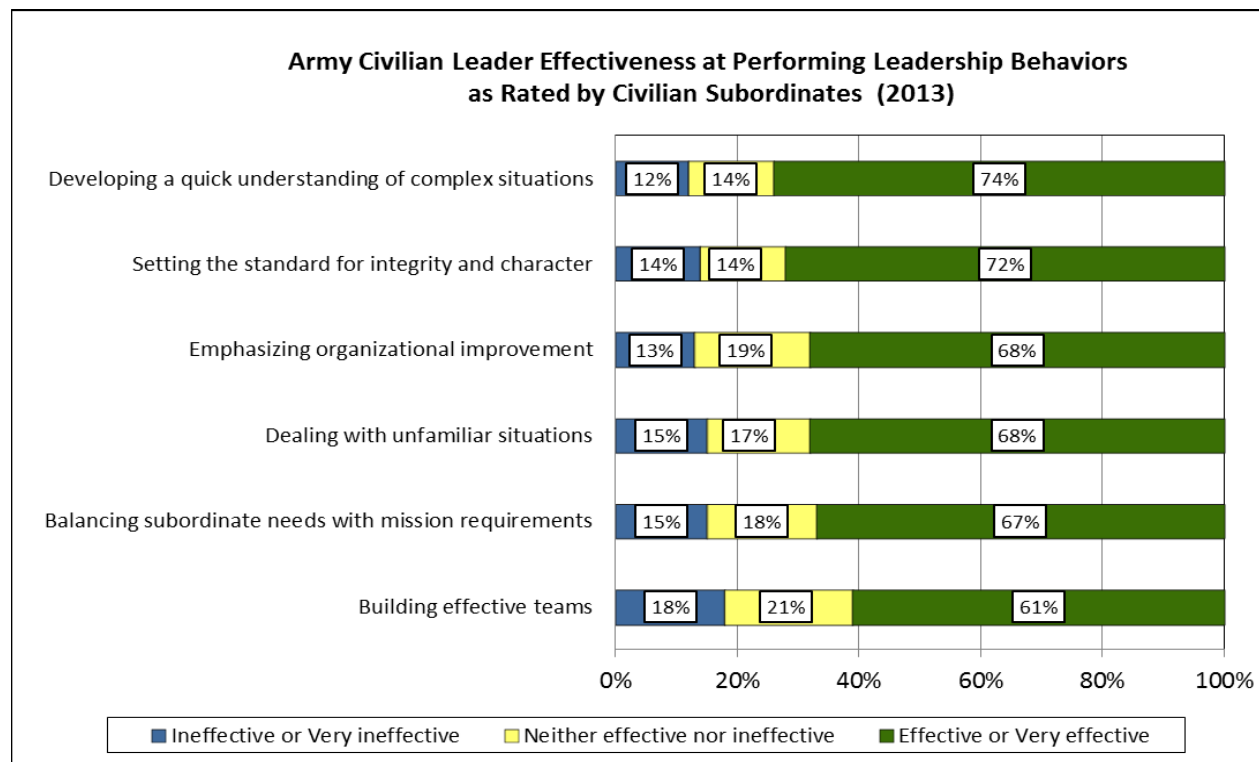
**Figure 7. Comparison of Army Civilian and Active Duty Uniformed Leaders on the Leader Attributes (% Effective/Very Effective, 2013).**



### 1.3 Characteristics of Effective Leadership

The 2013 CASAL assessed additional characteristics of leader performance and found that a majority of civilian leaders are rated effective in demonstrating various other leadership behaviors (see Figure 8). Favorable indicators include civilian leader effectiveness in developing a quick understanding of complex situations and in dealing with unfamiliar situations. Each of these behaviors is positively related to the attribute *Mental Agility* ( $r = .79$  and  $.81$ , respectively), the attribute with which 77% of civilian leaders are rated effective. Also favorable is that 72% of civilian leaders are rated effective in setting the standard for integrity and character, a behavior positively related to both the competency *Leads by Example* ( $r = .84$ ) and demonstrating the *Army Values* ( $r = .81$ ). A very positive finding is that 78% of civilian leaders agree their civilian immediate superior upholds ethical standards (only 8% disagree).

**Figure 8. Civilian Leader Effectiveness in Demonstrating Various Behaviors.**



CASAL results continue to show that an area where civilian leaders show room for improvement is in building teams. Sixty-one percent of civilian leaders are rated effective or very effective at building effective teams, while 18% are rated ineffective. Favorable ratings have ranged from 59% to 63% since first assessed by CASAL in 2009. Team building is a component of the core leader competency *Creates a Positive Environment*. Effective leaders foster teamwork, cohesion, cooperation and loyalty by encouraging people to work together and by promoting

teamwork and team achievement (Department of the Army, 2012b). Additional indicators of civilian leader effectiveness in building teams and fostering cohesion include:

- 73% of civilian leaders agree their immediate superior puts the needs of the unit/organization and mission ahead of self (10% disagree).
- 65% of civilian leaders agree their immediate superior promotes good communication among team members (16% disagree).
- Less than two thirds (57%) of civilian leaders indicate their immediate superior has had a positive or very positive effect on team cohesion.<sup>5</sup> While 19% agree their immediate superior does little to help the team be more cohesive, 61% disagree this is the case.

Sixty-one percent of civilian leaders are rated favorably at building effective teams, an area that continues to show room for improvement.

## 1.4 Influence

The 2013 CASAL explored perceptions about civilian leader effectiveness in using nine methods of influence described in Army leadership doctrine, ADRP 6-22. The nine methods are presented in Table 2 (Department of the Army, 2012b; Yukl & Tracey, 1992).

**Table 2. Methods of influence described in ADRP 6-22, Army Leadership.**

|                              |                                                                  |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Pressure</i>              | Makes explicit demands to achieve compliance                     |
| <i>Legitimizing</i>          | Emphasizes authority as the basis for a request                  |
| <i>Exchange</i>              | Makes an offer in trade for compliance                           |
| <i>Personal Appeals</i>      | Uses the basis of friendship or loyalty                          |
| <i>Collaboration</i>         | Commits personal assistance or resources to fulfill a request    |
| <i>Rational Persuasion</i>   | Applies evidence, logical arguments or explanations of relevance |
| <i>Apprising</i>             | Explains why an action will provide a benefit                    |
| <i>Inspirational Appeals</i> | Creates enthusiasm by arousing strong commitment                 |
| <i>Participation</i>         | Gets buy-in by having you take part                              |

Doctrine states “leaders can draw on a variety of methods to influence others and can use one or more methods to fit the specifics of any situation. These outcomes range from obtaining compliance to building commitment to achieve” results (ADRP 6-22, 6-2). Effective use of influence methods ultimately depends on a leader’s recognition of the outcome or side-effect of the influence (e.g., compliance or commitment) and the level of the individual(s) being influenced (downward, upward or lateral). Compliance is appropriate for rare, immediate requirements and situations where there is not a great need for a subordinate to understand

<sup>5</sup> The percentage of civilian leaders rated as having positive or very positive impact on unit or team cohesion (57%) is significantly lower than ratings for active duty uniformed leaders (71%).

why a request occurs. Compliance-seeking influence focuses on meeting and accounting for task demands. Commitment reaches deeper to change attitudes, beliefs and behavior, and generally produces longer lasting and broader effects. Gaining commitment is useful when the aim is to create initiative and high esteem within others. Commitment grows from an individual's desire to gain a sense of control and develop self-worth by contributing to the organization. Commitment-encouraging influence emphasizes empowerment and long-lasting trust.

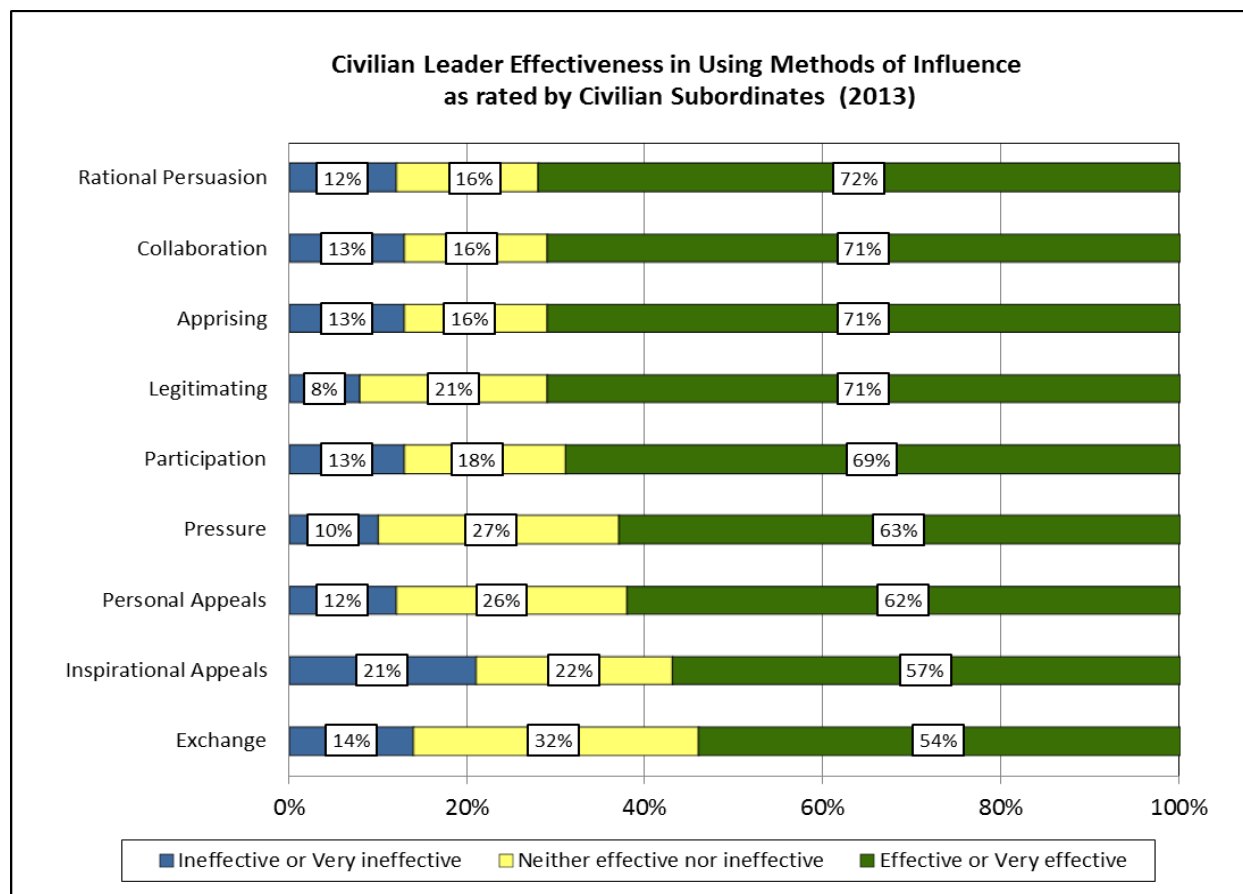
### Civilian Leader Effectiveness in Using Influence

A majority of civilian leaders (54% to 72%) rate their civilian immediate superior as effective or very effective at using the nine methods of influence described in Army leadership doctrine (see Figure 9).

- Overall, civilian leaders are rated most favorably in using *rational persuasion*, *collaboration*, *apprising*, *legitimizing*, and *participation*.
- The four lowest rated methods of influence are use of *pressure*, *personal appeals*, *inspirational appeals* and *exchange*.
- Larger percentages of civilian leaders report their immediate superior uses the methods of influence that aim at gaining commitment from others (i.e., participation, inspirational appeals, apprising, rational persuasion and collaboration). Smaller percentages of civilian leaders report their superior uses compliance-gaining methods (e.g., exchange, pressure, legitimizing and personal appeals).

Effective use of the nine methods of influence is positively related to effective leadership, and specifically, civilian leader demonstration of the core leader competencies ( $r's = .52$  to  $.86$ ,  $p's < .001$ ). Army Leadership doctrine (ADRP 6-22) is further supported by CASAL results as civilian leader effectiveness in the competency *Leads Others* shows the strongest average correlation with effective use of the nine methods of influence ( $r's = .48$  to  $.80$ ,  $p's < .001$ ).

**Figure 9. Civilian Leader Effectiveness in Using Influence Methods.**



### **Summary of Findings on the Quality of Leadership**

Army civilian leaders continue to exhibit moderate to strong levels of leadership quality. A majority of managers and first line supervisors at all grades view their civilian superiors as effective leaders. Civilian leader strengths include getting results, preparing oneself and stewardship of the profession. A majority of civilian leaders are also viewed favorably in demonstrating mental agility to deal with complex situations, and in setting the standard for integrity and character. Areas for continued focus and improvement are civilian leader effectiveness in developing subordinate leaders and in building effective teams, specifically in fostering cohesion among team members. Civilian leaders effectively use various methods of influence to achieve results, and larger percentages are perceived to use methods effectively to gain commitment from others as opposed to compliance-gaining methods, which is a positive finding.

## **2. Climate and Situational Factors within the Working Environment**

CASAL assesses and tracks trends on civilian leader morale, commitment and career satisfaction, and examines the interrelationships between these factors. Additionally, attitudes and perceptions about characteristics of the current working environment (e.g., engagement, organizational climate) provide context for factors that affect the quality of leadership, duty performance and mission outcomes.

Also examined are civilian leader perceptions about the levels of trust in organizations and effective leadership behaviors that build trust. A new area examined by CASAL is mission command, including the effectiveness of leaders in demonstrating the principles of mission command and the extent that operating environments reflect the mission command philosophy.

### **2.1 Commitment, Morale and Career Satisfaction**

A strength of the Army Civilian Corps is the level of commitment that civilian leaders hold toward their teams and work groups. Nearly all civilian leaders (96%) agree or strongly agree they are committed to their team or immediate work group because of their sense of personal loyalty. This has remained a strong and consistent trend observed by CASAL. Since 2009, no more than 3% of civilian leaders have indicated disagreement that they hold this type of commitment. As another indication of commitment, 83% of civilian leaders indicate they are proud to tell others they are a member of their unit or organization.<sup>6</sup>

While levels of commitment remain strong and consistent, civilian leader morale shows a sharp decline in 2013. Less than half of civilian managers (48%) and first line supervisors (40%) report high or very high morale. About one in four civilian leaders (24% of managers, 29% of first line supervisors) report low or very low morale.<sup>7</sup> These results reflect a decline to the lowest levels observed by CASAL since first assessed in 2010. The change is not unexpected given the recent climate of fiscal uncertainty within the federal government and specifically the Department of Defense. In 2013, Army civilians experienced continued pay and hiring freezes, budgetary constraints and furloughs which suspended many civilian employees from their assigned duties for short periods of time. The 2013 CASAL results reflect attitudes associated with these

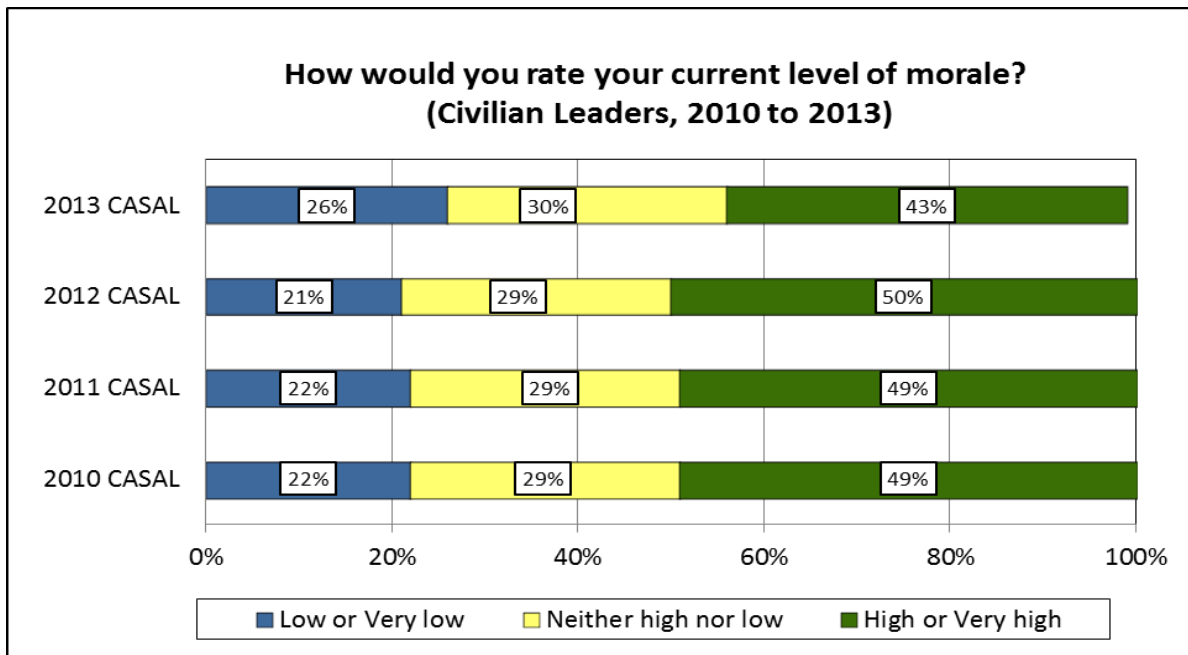
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<sup>6</sup> Civilian leader agreement (83%) with the statement 'I am proud to tell others that I am a member of my unit or organization' is significantly more favorable than active duty uniformed leader agreement (74%).

<sup>7</sup> The percentage of civilian leaders reporting high or very high morale (43%) is significantly lower than the level reported by active duty uniformed leaders (55%).

challenges, as data collection occurred in October/November 2013. Figure 10 shows levels of morale among civilian leaders since 2010.

**Figure 10. Levels of Civilian Leader Morale from 2010 to 2013.**



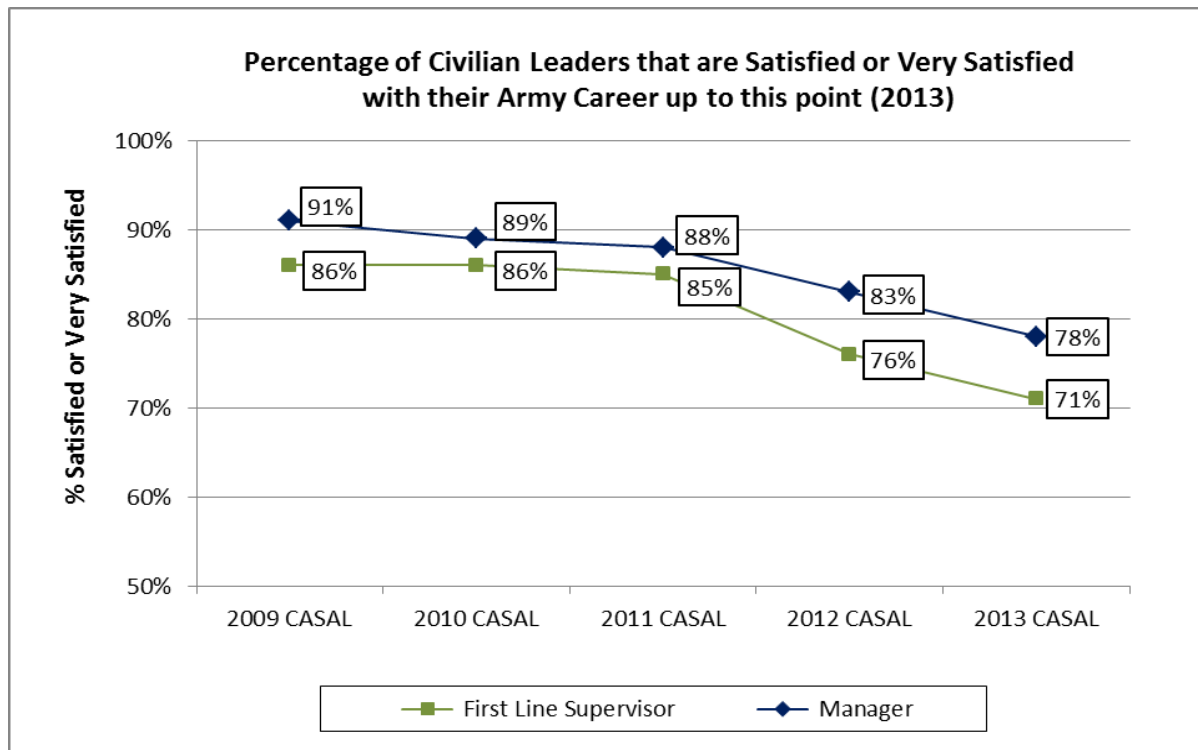
CASAL data show a positive relationship between morale and career satisfaction ( $r = .61, p < .001$ ). Though positively related, these constructs differ. Morale represents leaders' current affective reaction to the environment or job in which they operate. Career satisfaction represents a compilation of affective and other attitudes regarding characteristics spanning a leader's career (Locke, 1976; Pinder, 1998). There has been a decline in recent years, although overall levels of career satisfaction among civilian leaders are still favorable. In 2013, 78% of managers and 71% of first line supervisors report they are satisfied or very satisfied with their Army career up to this point. Notably, 2013 results represent a 14% drop in the percentage of satisfied civilian leaders since 2010 (see Figure 11). Findings from the 2013 Army Civilian Attitude Survey show that 5% to 8% fewer non-supervisors than supervisors and managers rate job satisfaction positively. Favorability levels on all human capital satisfaction indicators dropped by 1% to 7% since 2010 for both civilian leaders and their subordinates.

Forty-eight percent of managers and 40% of first line supervisors report high/very high morale, the lowest level observed by CASAL since 2010.

Literature has demonstrated the importance of effective leadership in promoting and reinforcing effective working environments and climates (Ostroff, Kinicki, & Tamkins, 2003).

CASAL results show a positive association between effective leadership and civilian leader morale and career satisfaction. Specifically, civilian leaders who agree their immediate superior is an effective leader also tend to report favorable levels of morale ( $r = .46, p < .001$ ) and career satisfaction ( $r = .35, p < .001$ ).

**Figure 11. Levels of Civilian Leader Career Satisfaction from 2010 to 2013.**



## 2.2 Working Environment

The 2013 CASAL included expanded coverage on job engagement and characteristics of Army working environments including factors related to the mission and organizational climate. Overall, results indicate that civilian leaders continue to report favorable attitudes toward characteristics of the units and organizations in which they work.

### Civilian Leader Engagement

Managers and first line supervisors show moderate to strong levels of engagement in their current duties:



- An overwhelming majority (94%) agree that their assigned duties are important to their unit or organization (4% disagree).<sup>8</sup>
- Eighty-eight percent of civilian leaders agree they know what is expected of them in their current position (7% disagree).
- Two-thirds (68%) agree they feel informed about decisions that affect their work responsibilities (20% disagree). A positive finding is that civilian leader perceptions about the flow of information in their organization show more favorability in 2012 and 2013 (66% and 68% agree) following a steady downward trend observed from 2009-2011 (from 74% to 56% agree). There is still room for improvement as one in five disagree they feel informed of work-related decisions.

CASAL findings on civilian work engagement in the Army are supported by results of the 2013 Army Civilian Attitude Survey, which found that 94% of civilian supervisors agreed the work they do is important, 82% agreed they know what is expected of them on the job, and 83% agreed that their work gives them a feeling of personal accomplishment. Again, the level of information flow within organizations showed relatively less favorable ratings, as only 62% of civilian supervisors indicated satisfaction with their involvement in decisions that affect their work and 57% were satisfied with the information they received from management on what is going on in the organization (Civilian Personnel Evaluation Agency, 2013).

#### Factors Affecting Mission Accomplishment

Civilian leaders report positive attitudes toward factors that relate to the ability of their unit or organization to perform its mission:

- Eighty-five percent of civilian leaders agree they are confident in the ability of their unit/organization to perform its mission, while only 8% disagree.
- Three-fourths of civilian leaders (77%) agree that standards are upheld in their unit or organization (e.g., professional bearing, adherence to regulations), while 12% disagree.
- Results to both of these items are positive and show no notable change from results of the 2012 CASAL.

Further, a majority of managers and first line supervisors agree or strongly agree that members of their unit or organization collaborate effectively to achieve results, do their share of the work, and deliver on what they say they will do (see Figure 12). Eighty percent or more agree that unit members are committed to performing at a high level<sup>9</sup>, while 73% agree unit members are empowered to make decisions pertaining to the performance of their duties.

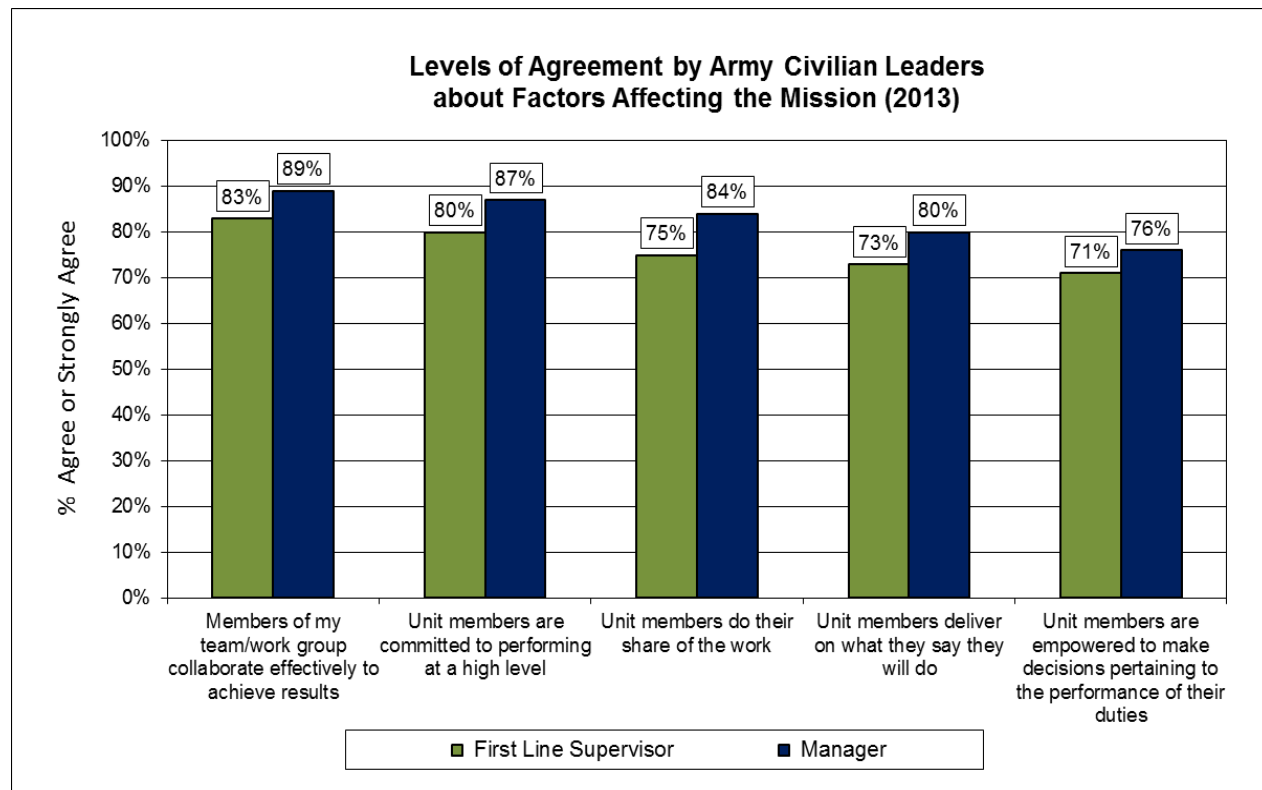
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<sup>8</sup> Civilian leader agreement (94%) with the statement 'My assigned duties are important to my unit or organization' is significantly more favorable than active duty uniformed leader agreement (87%).

<sup>9</sup> Civilian leader agreement (83%) with the statement 'Members of my unit or organization are committed to performing at a high level' is significantly more favorable than active duty uniformed leader agreement (75%).

Again, results of the 2013 Army Civilian Attitude Survey also show positive attitudes toward factors related to mission readiness. More than three-fourths of civilian supervisors agreed or strongly agreed that people they work with cooperate to get the job done (79%), and that overall, the workforce has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals (78%). Additionally, 73% indicated their organization was well prepared to perform its mission (Civilian Personnel Evaluation Agency, 2013).

**Figure 12. Army Civilian Leader Attitudes about Working Environments.**

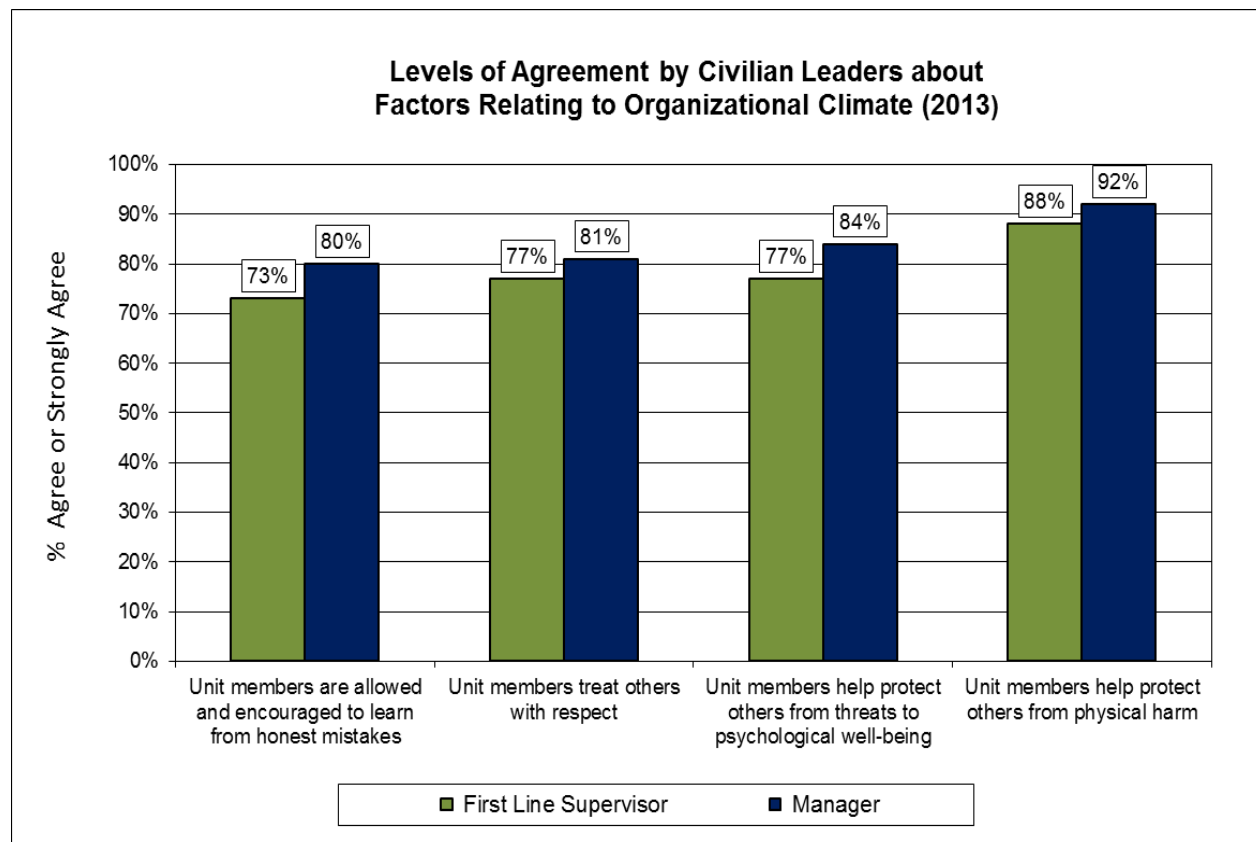


### Indicators of Organizational Climate

CASAL results indicate the organizational climates in which civilian leaders operate continue to be positive. A majority of civilian leaders perceive the climate of their current organization to be supportive of learning, as three-fourths of civilian leaders (76%) agree that members of their unit/organization are allowed and encouraged to learn from honest mistakes (12% disagree). Further, three out of four civilian leaders (75%) agree that if they were to report an ethical violation, senior leaders would take action to address it (12% disagree), while 85% of active duty uniformed leaders believe senior leaders would take action.

Results also indicate that interactions among unit members tend to be positive and supportive. More than three-fourths of civilian leaders agree or strongly agree that members of their unit/organization treat others with respect, help protect others from threats to psychological well-being, and help protect others from physical harm (see Figure 13).

**Figure 13. Army Civilian Leader Attitudes about Organizational Climate.**



In summary, civilian leaders generally hold positive attitudes about their job duties and the organizations in which they perform their duties. This is important, as research (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Morgeson & Campion, 2003) has demonstrated that the characteristics of one's job and the working environment are positively associated with both individual outcomes (i.e., employee satisfaction, motivation, job performance) and organizational outcomes (i.e., turnover and absenteeism).

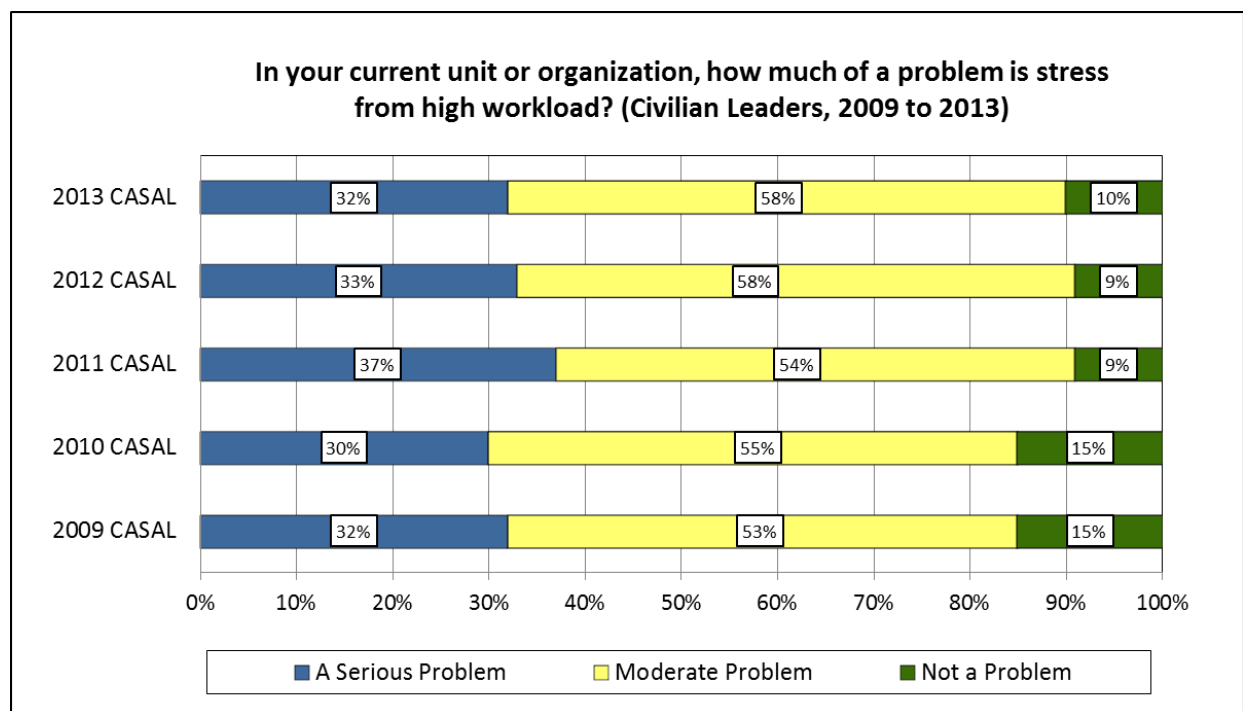
CASAL results show that civilian leaders' attitudes toward the performance of their duties (e.g., amount of freedom or latitude offered in the conduct of their duties, knowing what is expected of them, perceived importance of duties to the organization's mission, feeling informed about decisions that affect their work) are positively related to their current levels of morale ( $r_s = .37$  to  $.51$ ,  $p_s < .001$ ) and career satisfaction ( $r_s = .26$  to  $.45$ ,  $p_s < .001$ ). Similarly, civilian leader

attitudes toward their unit or organization (e.g., proud to tell others they are a member of organization, unit members collaborate effectively, unit members do their share of work and treat others with respect, and members being allowed and encouraged to learn from honest mistakes) are also positively related to current levels of morale ( $rs = .34$  to  $.47$ ,  $ps < .001$ ) and job satisfaction ( $rs = .33$  to  $.48$ ,  $ps < .001$ ).

## 2.3 Workload and Stress

CASAL assesses and tracks trends in the severity of stress from high workload that Army leaders perceive in their jobs. Overall, about one in three civilian leaders have consistently indicated that stress from a high workload is a serious problem (from a low of 30% in 2010 to a high of 37% in 2011). Results of the 2013 CASAL show consistency with prior years as there is no notable change in the percentage of leaders reporting stress as a serious or moderate problem.<sup>10</sup> Results from 2009 to 2013 are presented in Figure 14.

**Figure 14. Civilian Leaders Reporting Stress from High Workload as a Problem from 2009 to 2013.**



<sup>10</sup> On a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 indicates 'Not a problem at all' and 7 indicates 'A serious problem,' civilian leaders ( $M = 4.68$ ) differ significantly from active duty uniformed leaders ( $M = 4.09$ ) in ratings for the severity of the problem of stress from a high workload.

CASAL also assesses civilian leader perceptions on how the incidence of workload stress affects well-being and work quality. Of managers and first line supervisors reporting stress from a high workload as a moderate to serious problem:

- More than half (62%) indicate work stress has had a moderate, large or great negative impact on their well-being.
- About half (51%) indicate work stress has had a moderate, large or great negative impact on the quality of their work.

Importantly, 60% of managers and 56% of first line supervisors agree or strongly agree that seeking help for stress-related problems (not limited to seeking help just at work) is accepted and encouraged in their unit or organization (10% and 11% disagree, respectively). This finding has trended upward in recent years, as the overall level of civilian leader agreement in 2012 and 2013 (60% and 57%) are more favorable than those observed the previous three years (47% to 51%).

One in three civilian leaders reports stress from a high workload is a serious problem. Workload stress affects civilian leader well-being and work quality.

Organizational support for issues such as high workloads and stress is also evident in results from the 2013 Army Civilian Attitude Survey. Findings show that just over half of civilian supervisors (56%) agreed their workload is reasonable, down from 61% in 2010, and only one in three (36%) agreed there is a sufficient number of people to do the work. However, two positive findings indicate that a majority of civilian supervisors agreed that they know who to talk with about work related problems (80%) and that their supervisor supports their need to balance work and family issues (84%). The 2013 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey captured comparable attitudes by Army civilians regarding workloads being reasonable (58% agree/strongly agree) and having received supervisor support in balancing work and other life issues (78% agree/strongly agree).

## **2.4 Trust**

The 2013 CASAL examined civilian leader attitudes toward the current levels of trust in the Army through three approaches. This section presents civilian leader findings on the following:

- The overall perceived level of trust in Army units and organizations and factors positively associated with trust.
- The levels of trust civilian leaders have in others with whom they work (i.e., proximal relationships) and factors associated with leader trustworthiness.
- Civilian leader effectiveness in building trust and related behaviors, and the impact of leader trust building on organizational and subordinate outcomes.

## Trust in Army Units and Organizations

Trust means having faith that others will do their part to help the team accomplish its mission and be secure. Higher levels of trust relate to better upholding of standards, confidence in unit capabilities, effective communication and higher cohesion. Civilian leader perceptions of trust at the unit or organizational level are moderately favorable, as demonstrated by several indicators. As a broad assessment, 44% of civilian leaders indicate trust is high or very high among members of their unit or organization, while one-third (34%) report there is moderate trust. About one in five civilian leaders (22%) report low or very low trust exists in their organization. Results are similar to those observed in the 2012 CASAL, which found that 18% of civilian leaders disagreed/strongly disagreed that members of their unit or organization trust one another.

Results of the 2012 CASAL demonstrated that trust among members of units and organizations is strongly related to characteristics of the working environment, including open and honest communication, team cohesion, cooperative performance and accountability (i.e., upholding standards and enforcing discipline). Results of the 2013 CASAL extend these findings and show that organizations can benefit by fostering work climates that emphasize ethical conduct, adherence to standards, learning from honest mistakes and decentralized decision making. Each of these factors shows positive relationships with the perceived level of trust in units and organizations, as rated by civilian leaders.

- Trust is high in organizations with climates that empower unit members to make decisions pertaining to their duties ( $r = .57, p < .001$ ), allow and encourage learning from honest mistakes ( $r = .57, p < .001$ ), and uphold standards (e.g., professional bearing, adherence to regulations) ( $r = .59, p < .001$ ).
- Civilian leader perceptions of an ethical climate where senior leaders would take action to address violations (if reported) are also positively related to trust ( $r = .57, p < .001$ ).
- These factors represent conditions that senior leaders can influence to foster trust in their units and organizations.

The 2013 CASAL also captured new insights on work characteristics associated with trust. As noted previously, civilian leaders hold favorable perceptions about unit member behaviors that are supportive of positive climates and mission readiness. Each of the following factors shows a moderate to strong positive relationship with the perceived level of trust among unit members:

- Unit members treat others with respect ( $r = .60, p < .001$ )
- Unit members do their share of the work ( $r = .46, p < .001$ )
- Unit members deliver on what they say they will do ( $r = .53, p < .001$ )

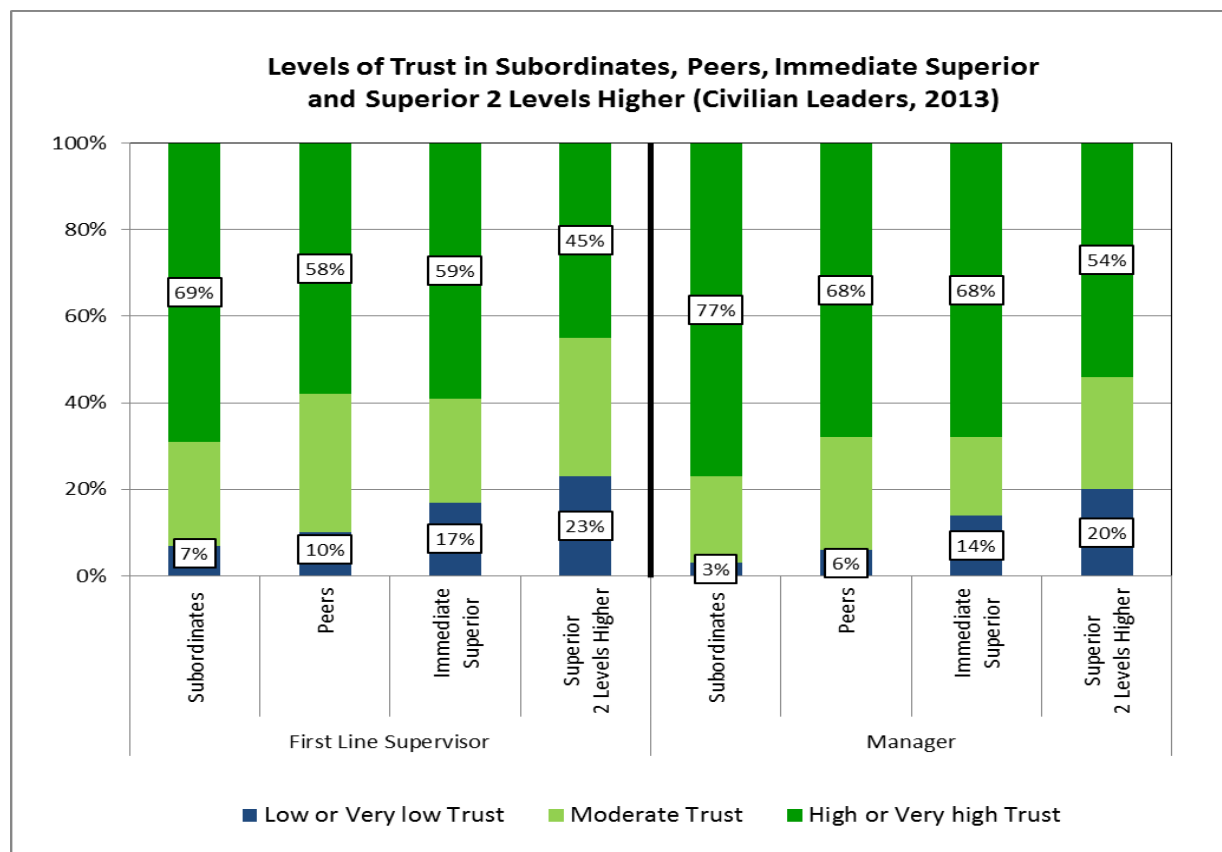
- Unit members help protect others from psychological harm ( $r = .53, p < .001$ )

Thus, high levels of trust tend to be present in organizational climates where unit members exhibit supportive behaviors such as these.

### Trust in Leaders and Others

Overall, civilian leader ratings for the level of trust they have in others are generally favorable and reflect the presence of positive relationships in Army units and organizations. A majority of civilian leaders report having moderate, high or very high trust in those with whom they work and interact. Specifically, 72% of civilian leaders report having high/very high trust in their subordinates, while 62% report high/very high trust in their peers. Between 3% and 10% of civilian leaders report having low or very low trust in their subordinates and peers. Figure 15 displays results for the reported levels of trust civilian leaders have in others.

**Figure 15. Civilian Leader Ratings of Trust in Subordinates, Peers and Superiors.**



A majority of civilian leaders (68% of managers and 59% of first line supervisors) report having high or very high trust in their immediate superior. Moderate levels of trust in immediate superiors were reported by 19% of managers and 24% of first line supervisors (14% and 17%,

respectively, indicated low/very low trust). Civilian leader ratings of trust in their immediate superior do not differ meaningfully based on the cohort of the superior (i.e., whether the superior is a civilian leader or uniformed leader). While not an exact comparison to CASAL results, the 2013 Army Civilian Attitude Survey reported that 73% of civilian supervisors agreed with the statement ‘I have trust and confidence in my supervisor’ while 14% disagreed. These findings further demonstrate the relative low frequency of distrust in one’s immediate superior.

CASAL results also show that civilian leader trust in their immediate superior is significantly related to the extent the superior exhibits two leadership competencies and two attributes. Specifically, a civilian leader’s effectiveness in *Building Trust*, living the *Army Values*, *Getting Results* and demonstrating *Empathy* explains a significant amount of variance in the level of trust civilian leader subordinates have in that leader ( $R^2 = .66, p < .001$ ). These are characteristics that exemplify a civilian leader’s trustworthiness.

About half of civilian leaders (54% of managers and 45% of first line supervisors) report high or very high trust in their superior two levels up (i.e., the individual directly above their immediate superior). Low trust in one’s superior two levels up was reported by 20% of managers and 23% of first line supervisors.<sup>11</sup> This subset of participants commented on reasons why their trust toward this person is low. Reasons for low and very low trust were most prominently reflected in two themes: communication issues (e.g., lack of communication, ineffective or unclear guidance; 19% of comments); and character or integrity issues (e.g., dishonesty, ethical breaches, inconsistent standards; 16% of comments). Additionally, the following themes were represented by 5% to 8% of the comments for this subset of respondents:

- Disconnected, absentee or apathetic leadership (e.g., lack of presence or interaction)
- Favoritism and partiality (e.g., cronyism, nepotism, unequal treatment)
- Self-interest or self-serving behaviors
- Failing to hold others accountable (i.e., not taking corrective action, being dismissive of problems)
- Poor judgment and ineffective decision making
- Micromanaging subordinates (i.e., failing to empower subordinates to act)
- Low competence/lack of experience

Overall, the comments show that subordinates hold low levels of trust in civilian superiors they perceive to demonstrate ineffective leadership.

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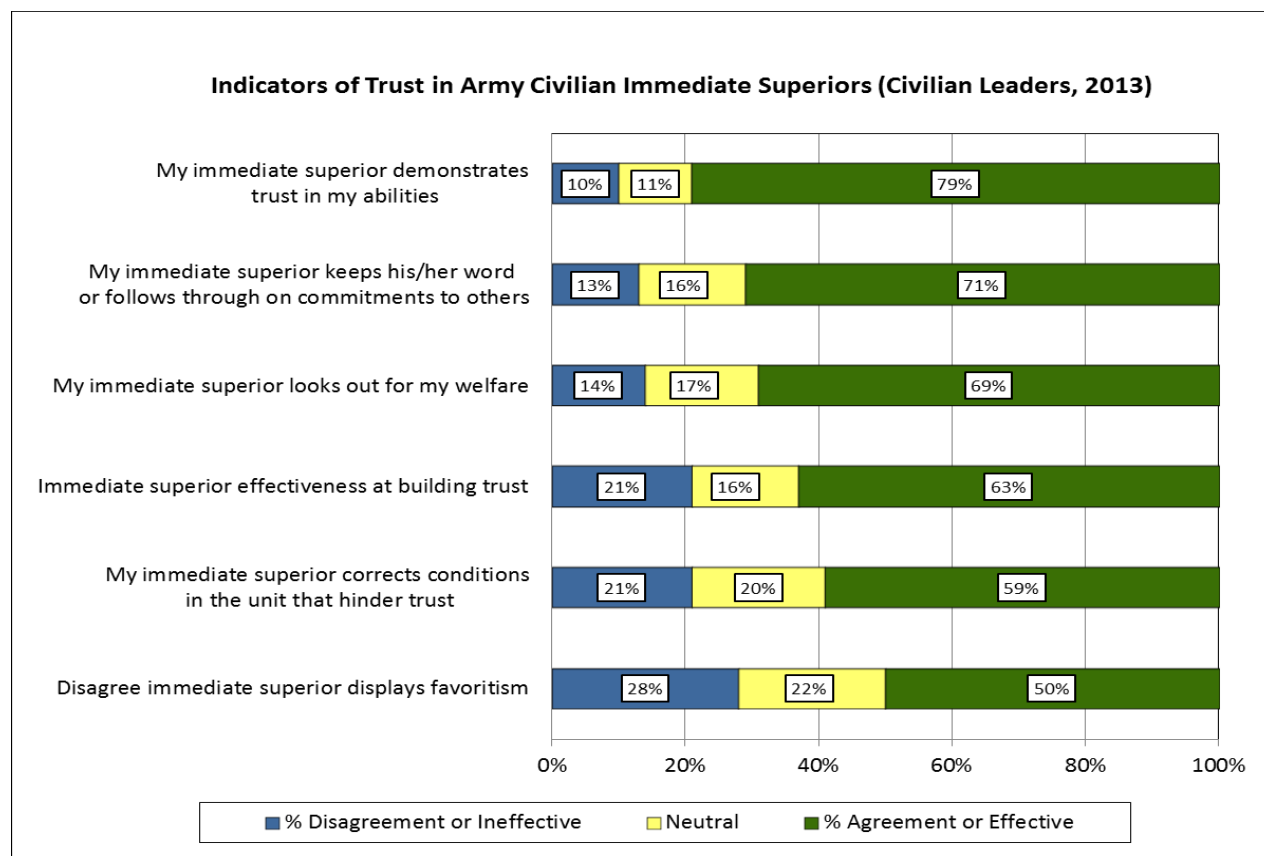
<sup>11</sup> The 2013 CASAL did not collect the position, rank or cohort of participants’ superior two levels up.



## Civilian Leader Effectiveness in Building Trust

Army leaders build trust to strengthen relationships and encourage commitment among followers. This starts with respect among people and grows from both common experiences and shared understanding. Trust establishes conditions for effective influence and for creating a positive environment (Department of the Army, 2012b). Subordinate ratings for several indices of civilian leader effectiveness in building and sustaining trust among followers are presented in Figure 16. These items capture attitudes about civilian leader behaviors important for building trust in organizations such as demonstrating trust in subordinates' abilities; honoring commitments to others; positively correcting unit conditions that hinder trust; looking out for subordinate welfare; and refraining from displaying favoritism.

**Figure 16. Indicators of Trust in Immediate Superiors by Civilian Leaders.**



Results indicate civilian leaders are rated favorably in demonstrating trust in subordinates' abilities, keeping their word/following through on commitments to others, and looking out for subordinate welfare. Overall, civilian leaders fall below a two-thirds favorable threshold on the competency *Builds Trust*. In 2013, 63% of civilian leaders are rated effective and 21% are rated ineffective. These percentages show no change since first assessed by CASAL in 2011. Further,

two related areas where civilian leaders are also rated low include correcting conditions in the unit that hinder trust and displaying favoritism.

Army leadership doctrine states that leaders build and sustain climates of trust by assessing factors or conditions that promote or hinder trust, and correct team members who undermine trust with their attitudes or actions (Department of the Army, 2012b). Previous CASAL findings identified poor communication (or lack of communication), discipline problems and favoritism or inconsistent standards as conditions that hinder trust. Leaders who demonstrate effective leadership (i.e., character, leading by example, empathy and care for others) and uphold standards, enforce discipline and hold others accountable promote trust in environments where negative conditions may threaten it.

Favoritism is a leader behavior that is negatively related to effective demonstration of the leader competencies and attributes, particularly *Creates a Positive Environment* ( $r = -.47, p < .001$ ). Favoritism, preferential treatment, inconsistent enforcement and double standards are factors that hinder trust by creating climates of perceived inequality. Civilian leader comments frequently referenced favoritism as reflecting cronyism, unfair personnel actions, and decisions made to benefit a select group. Examples included offering unfair advantages or benefits to friends or close colleagues to the detriment of the interests of others, unequal enforcement of standards and discipline, and use of discretion in workplace justice.

As demonstrated in previous CASAL, civilian leader effectiveness in building trust is positively associated with effective leadership. A composite scale score<sup>12</sup> was used to examine the relationship between trust building behavior, effective leadership and important outcomes. Results show that civilian leaders who rate their civilian superior favorably across the six behaviors (the trust composite score) also rate their immediate superior effective in demonstrating the core leader competencies ( $r = .90, p < .001$ ) the leader attributes ( $r = .87, p < .001$ ) and indicate agreement that their immediate superior is an effective leader ( $r = .86, p < .001$ ).

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<sup>12</sup> Six items that reflect behaviors associated with immediate superior effectiveness in demonstrating trust were combined into a single scale composite variable. The composite variable included the items presented in Figure 16. Values across these six items were summed and then divided by six to produce a single score with a minimum value of 1 and a maximum value of 5. Scale scores of '5' indicate a respondent's average rating across all six items = 5 (highest rating that immediate superior demonstrates trust behaviors). A composite score was only generated for respondents who rated their immediate superior on all six trust items. A reliability analysis showed that this set of items demonstrated very strong internal consistency ( $\alpha = .92$ ). Reliability indices above .80 are generally considered acceptable for a measurement scale while values greater than .90 are considered very strong (Guion, 1998).

Further, trust building behaviors are positively associated with favorable subordinate and organizational outcomes (see Table 3). Civilian leaders who are viewed as exhibiting positive trust building behavior (i.e., the favorable end of the leader trust composite scale) are rated as effective in getting results to accomplish the mission and as having a positive effect on team cohesion. These superiors are also rated as positively effecting subordinate work quality, motivation, commitment to the Army and morale. These findings continue to demonstrate the importance of building trust, as civilian leaders who are effective in building trust have a positive effect on their followers and on mission accomplishment.

Civilian leaders effective at building trust have a positive effect on team cohesion and subordinate work quality, motivation, commitment and morale.

**Table 3. Correlations of Leader Trust with Subordinate and Mission-Related Outcomes.**

| Relationship between Immediate Superior Demonstrating Trust and the Effect on Subordinate and Organizational Outcomes |                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                       | Civilian Leaders<br>(n = 2,687) |
| Effect on Team Cohesion                                                                                               | .83**                           |
| Immediate Superior effectiveness in getting results to accomplish the mission successfully                            | .75**                           |
| Effect on Subordinate Work Quality                                                                                    | .77**                           |
| Effect on Subordinate Motivation                                                                                      | .83**                           |
| Effect on Subordinate Commitment to the Army                                                                          | .74**                           |
| Current level of morale                                                                                               | .50**                           |

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## 2.5 Mission Command

The Army's doctrine on mission command (ADP 6-0) states the mission command philosophy is the exercise of authority and direction by the commander using mission orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commander's intent, to empower agile and adaptive leaders in the conduct of unified land operations (Department of the Army, 2012a). Mission command applies to all professionals within the Army. However, civilians do not commonly operate from a commander's orders, nor do many civilians have a commander in their organizational hierarchy. Similarly, many uniformed leaders, such as those in TDA organizations of the generating force, do not operate from orders. What is important is the philosophy of mission command and the concepts drawn from traditional mission orders. Leaders of all cohorts must have an understanding of the mission command philosophy to both lead and operate within the desired intent.

The 2013 CASAL assessed Army leader effectiveness in demonstrating principles of the mission command philosophy and the extent that current work environments and climates are

supportive of mission command. Specifically, CASAL sought to capture insights in support of the Army's understanding and movement toward Strategic End 1: All Army leaders understand and practice the mission command philosophy (Department of the Army, 2013). The 6 principles of the mission command philosophy and associated items assessed by CASAL are presented in Table 4.<sup>13</sup>

**Table 4. Principles of the Mission Command Philosophy and Associated CASAL items.**

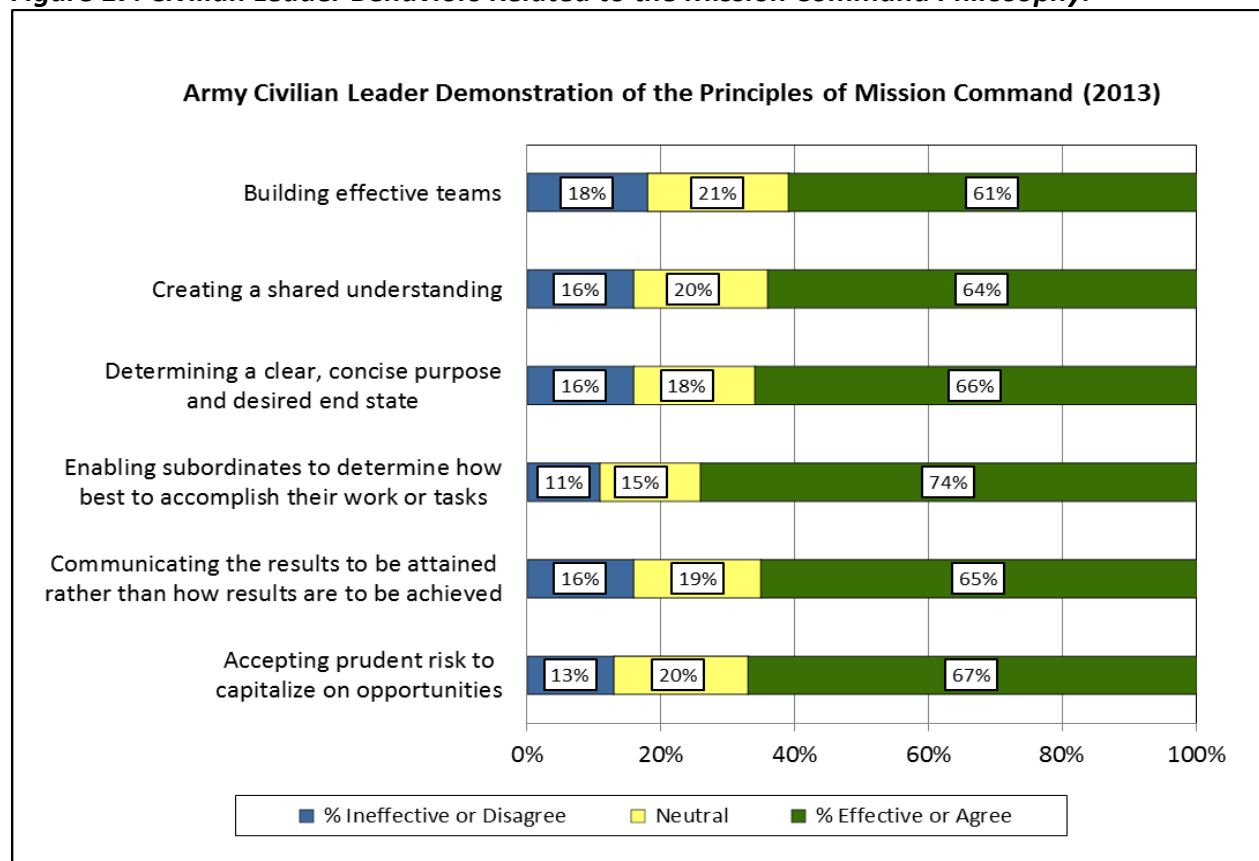
| <b>Mission Command Principles<br/>ADP 6-0</b>    | <b>CASAL Item<br/>"How effective is your immediate superior at..."</b>                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Build Cohesive Teams through Mutual Trust</i> | Building effective teams                                                                               |
| <i>Create Shared Understanding</i>               | Creating a shared understanding                                                                        |
| <i>Provide a Clear Commander's Intent</i>        | Determining a clear, concise purpose and desired end state                                             |
| <i>Exercise Disciplined Initiative</i>           | Enables subordinates to determine how best to accomplish their work or tasks ( <i>Agreement item</i> ) |
| <i>Use Mission Orders</i>                        | Communicating results to be attained rather than how results are to be achieved                        |
| <i>Accept Prudent Risk</i>                       | Accepting prudent risk to capitalize on opportunities                                                  |

A majority of managers and first line supervisors rate their civilian immediate superior favorably in demonstrating behaviors that reflect the six principles of mission command (see Figure 17). Nearly three out of four civilian leaders (74%) are rated effective or very effective at enabling subordinates to determine how best to accomplish their work or tasks (i.e., to exercise disciplined initiative). Results for several of these items sit at or slightly below a two-thirds favorability threshold, including accepting prudent risk; determining a clear, concise purpose and desired end state; and communicating the results to be attained rather than how results are to be achieved (i.e., uses mission orders). Smaller percentages of civilian leaders (64%) are rated effective in creating a shared understanding, and as noted previously, building effective teams (61%) is an area for improvement. For comparison, the levels of favorable ratings for active duty uniformed leaders ranged from 70% to 78% across the principles.

<sup>13</sup> CASAL items assessing mission command principles were worded to be relevant to both military and civilian respondents. For example, civilian leader effectiveness on the mission command principle 'Provide a clear commander's intent' was assessed through the item 'how effective is your immediate superior at determining a clear, concise purpose and desired end state?'

Mission command is a focal area within the Army leadership domain, and as expected, demonstration of the mission command philosophy is positively related to effective leadership. Trust is a key element of successful mission command. There are strong positive relationships between the level of trust civilian leaders have in their immediate superior and the superior's demonstration of the principles of mission command ( $r = .61$  to  $.72$ ,  $p$ 's  $< .001$ ).

**Figure 17. Civilian Leader Behaviors Related to the Mission Command Philosophy.**



Civilian leaders report positive attitudes about several organizational climate indicators supportive of the mission command philosophy. A majority of civilian leaders rate the following characteristics of climate favorably:

- 73% are satisfied or very satisfied with the amount of freedom or latitude they have in the conduct of their duties.
- 76% agree that members of their unit or organization are allowed and encouraged to learn from honest mistakes.
- 73% agree members of their unit or organization are empowered to make decisions pertaining to the performance of their duties.
- 78% indicate the level of trust among members of their unit or organization is moderate, high or very high.

These findings are favorable as they represent conditions in organizations that are conducive to the mission command philosophy. Favorable ratings by managers tend to be 4-7% higher than those of first line supervisors, though both cohorts exceed a two-thirds favorability threshold on all of the indices.

As the 2013 CASAL is the first year in which many of these factors related to mission command were assessed, these results will provide a basis for identifying change in future years. A goal of the mission command strategy is for Army-wide understanding and effective practice of the mission command philosophy. A positive indication of meeting this strategic end will be increased favorability in related behaviors and factors within organizational climates in future years.

### Mission Command Doctrine

Finally, an additional indicator of Army leader awareness and understanding of the mission command philosophy is the level of familiarity with Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 6-0, *Mission Command* (Department of the Army, 2012a). As expected, CASAL results show that civilian leader familiarity and awareness of this doctrine lags behind that of uniformed leaders (see Table 5). Larger percentages of managers report being somewhat or very familiar with ADP 6-0 than do first line supervisors. Notably, one-third of managers (36%) and just under half of first line supervisors (45%) are not familiar with mission command doctrine.

CASAL results show that civilian leader familiarity with mission command (doctrine) varies depending on the cohort of the respondents' immediate superior or supervisor. Specifically, larger percentages of managers (56%) and first line supervisors (42%) who report directly to a uniformed leader indicate they are somewhat or very familiar with ADP 6-0, compared to those who report to an Army civilian superior (39% and 31%, respectively).

**Table 5. Army Leader Familiarity with Mission Command Doctrine, ADP 6-0.**

|                          | <b>Not familiar with<br/>ADP 6-0, <i>Mission<br/>Command</i></b> | <b>Heard of ADP 6-0,<br/>but not very<br/>familiar with it</b> | <b>Somewhat familiar<br/>with ADP 6-0,<br/><i>Mission Command</i></b> | <b>Very familiar with<br/>ADP 6-0, <i>Mission<br/>Command</i></b> |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Managers                 | 36%                                                              | 19%                                                            | 30%                                                                   | 14%                                                               |
| First Line Supervisors   | 45%                                                              | 21%                                                            | 24%                                                                   | 9%                                                                |
| Active Uniformed Leaders | 20%                                                              | 21%                                                            | 40%                                                                   | 19%                                                               |

### ***Summary of Findings on Climate and Situational Factors within the Working Environment***

Army civilian leaders hold strong levels of commitment to their teams and immediate work groups. In 2013, the percentage of civilian leaders reporting high or very high morale declined sharply mirroring a federal climate of challenge and uncertainty. Career satisfaction remains at a favorable level but has been on a steady decline since 2011.

Managers and first line supervisors report moderate to strong levels of engagement in their duties. Several characteristics of the working environment are favorable, including civilian leader satisfaction with the degree of freedom or latitude in their jobs, agreement that standards are upheld, that team members collaborate to achieve results and treat others with respect. Stress from high workload continues to be a serious problem for one-third of civilian leaders, though seeking help for stress-related issues is better accepted and encouraged than it was in 2011.

Trust is an important component to building and sustaining effective organizations. From 80% to 90% of civilian leaders hold moderate, high or very high trust in their subordinates, peers and superiors. Ratings of trust in one's immediate superiors are strongly associated with positive ratings of their superior's *values, empathy, getting results* and *building trust*. There are clear linkages between effective leadership, trust, and positive organizational and subordinate outcomes. Civilian leaders who are viewed as effective in building trust are also perceived as positively impacting the motivation and well-being of their followers.

About two-thirds of civilian leaders are viewed as effective in demonstrating behaviors reflecting the mission command philosophy. Favorable implementation of mission command is also indicated by ratings that civilian subordinates are enabled to determine how best to accomplish their work and that they are allowed and encouraged to learn from honest mistakes.

### **3. Quality of Leader Development**

CASAL assesses and tracks trends in the quality of leader development in the Army. Essential findings on civilian leader development are organized by the following topic areas:

- The Army Leader Development Model
- Civilian Leader Development
- Leader Development Practices and Programs
- Civilian Education System (CES)
- Distributed Learning (DL)

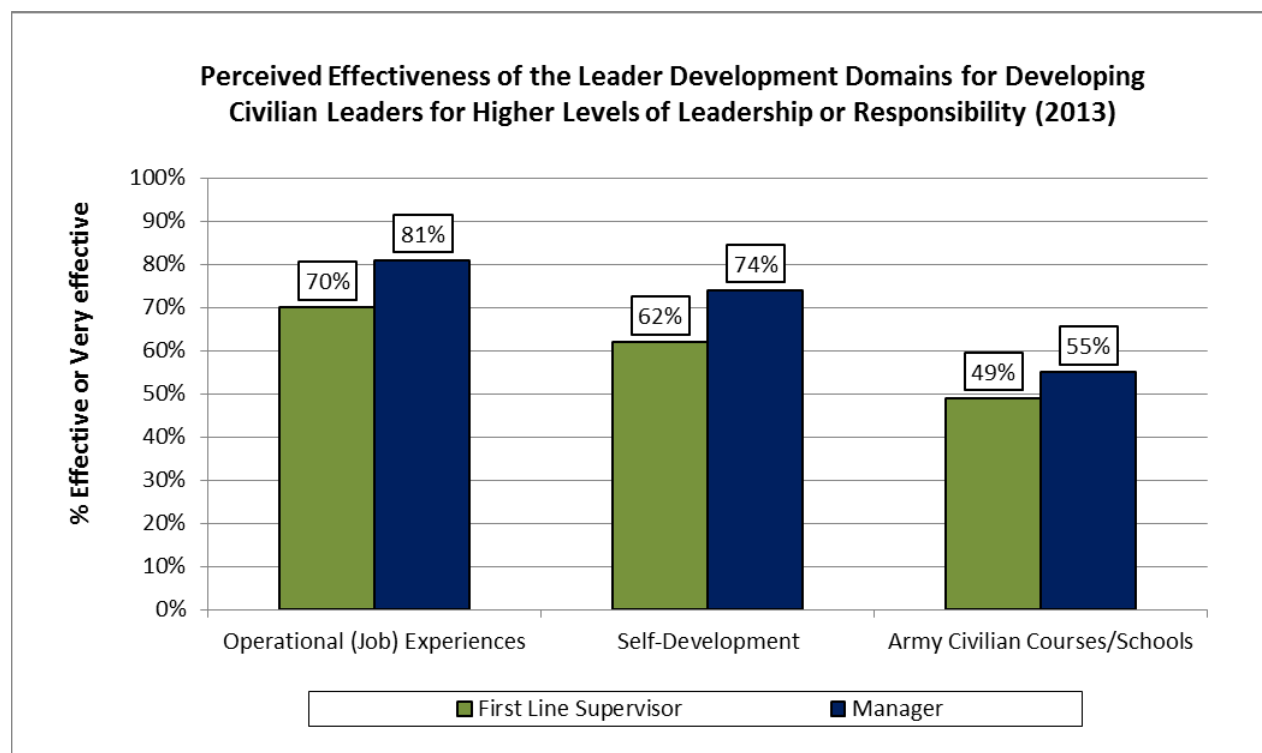
Key findings for each topic area provide an assessment of the current quality, engagement, effectiveness, role and level of support for civilian leader development in the Army.

### 3.1 The Army Leader Development Model

Leader development is a continuous and progressive process, and spans a leader's entire career. The Army's leader development model comprises training, education, and experience gained through three mutually supporting domains: operational, self-development, and institutional. By design, a majority of leader development occurs in operational assignments and through self-development, as limited time is allotted for schoolhouse learning (Department of the Army, 2012c).

Since 2009, CASAL has tracked the effectiveness and relative positive impact of the three leader development domains in preparing civilian leaders for higher levels of leadership responsibility. The percentages of managers and first line supervisors rating each domain effective or very effective in 2013 are presented in Figure 18.

**Figure 18. The Perceived Effectiveness of the Leader Development Domains by Civilian Leaders.**





A change to how the domain items were posed in 2013 precludes direct comparisons of these results to previous years. However, there are notable patterns in the results over time. Consistent with the model's intent, operational job experiences and self-development are rated most favorably. Attitudes toward institutional education (i.e., Army civilian courses/schools) have consistently lagged behind operational experience and self-development. Overall, less than one in five civilian leaders rate any of the three domains as ineffective or very ineffective for developing them for higher levels of leadership or responsibility (i.e., 8% or less for operational experience; 11% or less for self-development; 18% or less for institutional education).

### Operational (Job) Experiences

Civilian leaders prepare for future roles and responsibilities through leadership opportunities and experiences in their current roles. Seventy-four percent of civilian leaders (81% of managers and 70% of first line supervisors) believe their job experiences have been effective or very effective in developing them for higher levels of leadership or responsibility (5% and 10%, respectively, indicate they have been ineffective). Development through job experience occurs on an ongoing basis. This is evidenced in the large percentages of civilian leaders who reported 'frequently' or 'very frequently' engaging in opportunities to lead others and training on-the-job (as reported in the 2011 CASAL). Further, civilian leaders have consistently rated these opportunities among the most favorable in terms of their large or great positive impact on leader development (79% and 75%, respectively, in 2013).

### Self-Development

Self-development is the continuous, life-long process that is used to supplement and enhance knowledge and skills Army leaders gain through their job experiences and institutional education and training (Day, Harrison, & Halpin, 2009). Overall, 67% of civilian leaders (74% of managers and 62% of first line supervisors) rate self-development as an effective method for developing them for higher levels of leadership or responsibility. Only 11% of civilian leaders rate their self-development as ineffective.

Further, self-development activities are viewed by many civilian leaders as having a moderate to strong positive impact on their development. Sixty percent of civilian leaders indicate self-development has had a large or great positive impact on their development as a leader, while 28% rate the impact as moderate. Though it was not assessed in the 2013 CASAL, past studies have found that perceptions about organizational support for self-development vary. In 2011, more than half of civilian leaders (55%) believed their organization expected them to

participate in self-development other than mandatory training, though only 38% indicated their unit or organization made time available for self-development (Riley, Conrad, & Keller-Glaze, 2012).

### Institutional Education

Of civilian leaders who have attended a civilian education course at some point in their career, half (55% of managers and 49% of first line supervisors) rate Army institutional courses as effective or very effective in developing them for higher levels of leadership or responsibility. One-third of civilian leaders (31%) rate their course experience as neither effective nor ineffective in developing them, while 18% rate it ineffective. As a leader development practice, course attendance is not widely viewed as impactful on civilian development. However, larger percentages of civilian leaders indicate resident course attendance has had a large or great impact on their development (43%) compared to distributed learning (DL) courses (26%). About one-third of civilian leaders view resident attendance (30%) and DL/nonresident (32%) as having a moderate impact on their development. Overall, these findings represent consistent trends across years.

### **3.2 Civilian Leader Development**

Leader development for Army civilians is fundamentally different from uniformed leader development because of the differing terms of federal employment and conditions of military commissions, appointments and assignments. One indication of this difference is reflected in the average length a civilian leader has in an organization of over eleven years (see page 1), compared to the typical two- to three-year assignments for Soldiers. Time-based progression in ranks for Soldiers is another difference with conditions of Army civilian employment. Most Army civilians are hired for a position at a fully qualified level and can stay until they choose to leave. Most federal positions have no guarantee of advancement and limited opportunities within an organization's structure for advancement. Most openings occur when a current employee decides to leave a position. Pay advancement within a General Schedule grade occurs automatically by tenure, and is not based on development or superior performance. Advancement to positions of greater responsibility is an individual choice for Army civilians, while it is a condition for Soldiers in order for them to stay until retirement or the Army decides on their separation. Civilian leaders have an unofficial disincentive to develop subordinates, because current members usually leave the direct supervisor's work unit or the organization to receive advancement.

CASAL results continue to demonstrate that civilian leader development is currently at moderate levels:

- About two-thirds of civilian leaders (66%) report that leaders in their unit or organization develop the leadership skills of their subordinates to a 'slight' or 'moderate' extent. About one in five (22%) indicate leader development occurs to a 'large' or great' extent. Results are consistent with those observed in 2012.
- Fifty-four percent of civilian leaders rate their immediate superior effective at developing their subordinates (22% rate them ineffective) while 46% rate their superior effective at creating or calling attention to leader development opportunities in their current assignment (24% rate them ineffective). Results for each of these indices of leaders developing others show no change since first assessed in 2009 and 2012, respectively.

Results of the 2013 Army Civilian Attitude Survey provide additional insights on the current state of civilian leader development in organizations (Civilian Personnel Evaluation Agency, 2013). The survey found moderate levels among civilian supervisors regarding the following:

- Only half indicated they are satisfied with the priority their organization places on leader development (48%) and with the quality of available leader development training (48%).
- Fifty-six percent agreed they are given a real opportunity to improve their skills in their organization.
- Less than half indicated they were satisfied with the availability of opportunities to expand the range of their skills (43%) and with developmental assignments that offer experience in other functions in the organization (39%).
- Less than half (46%) indicated they were satisfied with the way their supervisor creates or calls attention to leader development opportunities.
- Nearly eight out of ten (78%) agreed that supervisors/team leaders in their work unit support employee development. This is an interesting finding, because while the percentage of agreement is favorable, it is unclear how respondents conceptualized supervisor support for development. Opportunities to improve existing skills and to expand skills through developmental assignments and experiences are useful informal methods of development, but the ratings reflect much lower levels of civilian satisfaction (i.e. the points listed above).

Additionally, the results of the 2013 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey also point to civilian leader development as an area in need of attention. In that survey, less than two-thirds of Army civilians agreed/strongly agreed that the supervisors or team leaders in their work unit supported employee development (62%). Nearly an equal percentage (63%) agreed their

supervisor or team leader provided them with opportunities to demonstrate their leadership skills (United States Office of Personnel Management, 2013).

### Formal and Informal Counseling

Thirty percent of civilian leaders report they receive formal or informal performance counseling semi-annually, while 27% report they receive it at rating time (see Table 6). Fourteen percent indicate they ‘never’ receive formal or informal counseling, which falls short of the requirement for civilians to conduct this annually (per AR 690-400). Less than half of civilian leaders (44%) agree that the feedback they received from their last performance counseling was useful in helping them set performance goals for improvement (24% disagree). The frequency and quality with which civilian leaders report receiving performance counseling do not show notable change from results observed in 2012.

**Table 6. Frequency in which Army Civilian Leaders Report Receiving Counseling (2013).**

| How Often do you Receive Formal or Informal Performance Counseling? |                       |           |               |                |                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Civilian Leaders                                                    | Monthly or More Often | Quarterly | Semi-Annually | At Rating Time | Never or Almost Never |
| <b>Managers</b>                                                     | 20%                   | 11%       | 29%           | 25%            | 15%                   |
| <b>First Line Supervisors</b>                                       | 16%                   | 12%       | 31%           | 28%            | 13%                   |
| <b>Total</b>                                                        | 17%                   | 12%       | 30%           | 27%            | 14%                   |

Less formal developmental interactions occur more frequently between superiors and subordinates, but could be improved even more. CASAL results suggest that discussions about job performance, performance improvement and preparing for future responsibilities are more common than traditional performance counseling:

- 64% of civilian leaders agree their immediate superior takes time to talk to them about how they are doing in their work (20% disagree).
- 52% of civilian leaders agree their immediate superior takes time to talk to them about how they could improve their duty performance (24% disagree).
- 41% of civilian leaders agree their immediate superior takes time to talk to them about what they should do to prepare for future assignments (32% disagree).
- The levels of civilian leader agreement to these items in 2013 are consistent with results observed in the 2012 CASAL.

There is a positive relationship between the occurrence of these less formal developmental interactions and ratings for superior effectiveness in developing subordinates ( $r = .69$  to  $.71$ ). Leaders who take the time to have informal discussions with their subordinates about

subordinate job performance, what they can do to improve and how they should prepare for future positions are more likely to be viewed as effective in developing others.

Results of others surveys demonstrate comparable attitudes by civilian leaders regarding the frequency and quality of performance feedback and counseling they receive.

- The 2013 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey found that while nearly three-fourths of Army civilians (72%) indicated their supervisor/team leader had talked with them about their performance in the past six months, only 57% agreed their superior provided them with constructive suggestions to improve job performance (United States Office of Personnel Management, 2013).
- In the 2013 Army Civilian Attitude Survey, 57% of civilian supervisors indicated they receive regular performance feedback, and an equal percentage (57%) agreed the performance feedback they receive is useful. A promising finding is that seven out of ten (71%) agreed that discussions with their supervisor about their performance are worthwhile (Civilian Personnel Evaluation Agency, 2013). But as demonstrated by trends observed in CASAL results, smaller percentages of civilian leaders (44%) agree the performance feedback received during these discussions effectively helps them set performance goals for improvement.

### Mentoring

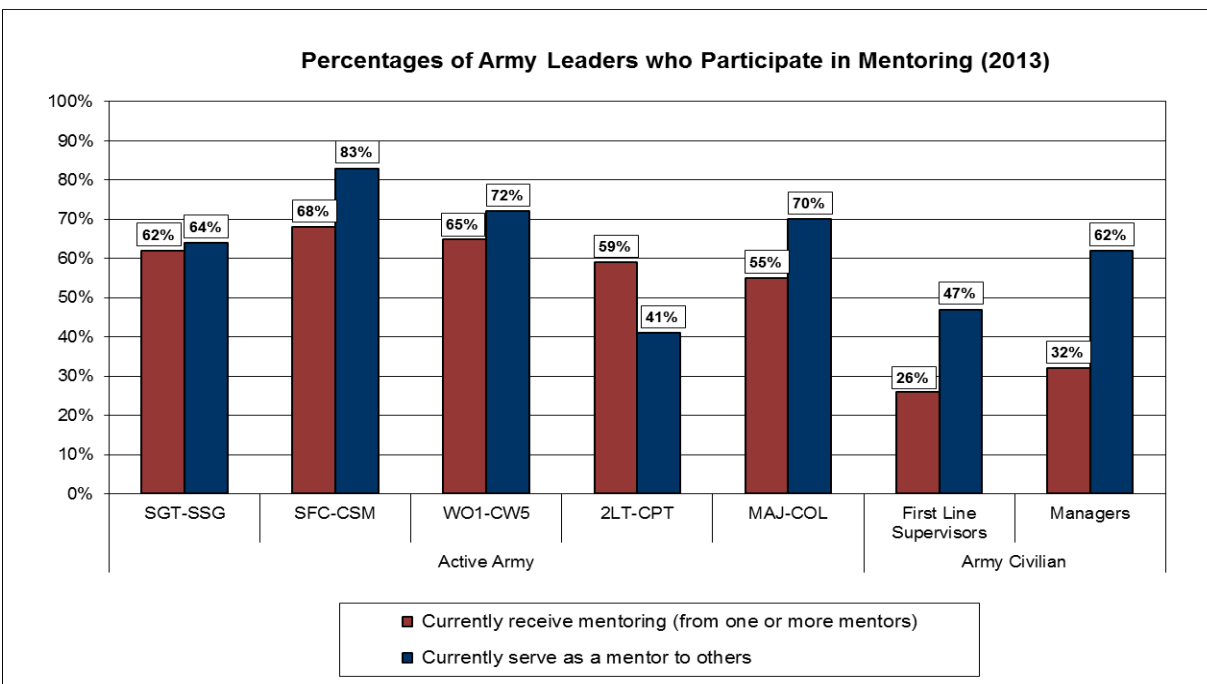
The Army defines mentoring as the voluntary developmental relationship that exists between a person of greater experience and a person of lesser experience that is characterized by mutual trust and respect (Department of the Army, 2007). *Army Leadership* (ADRP 6-22) expounds on this definition by identifying general characteristics of a mentoring relationship. Namely, mentorship affects both personal and professional development; both individuals must be active participants; and contrary to common belief, mentoring is not limited to superior-subordinate relationships.

Mentorship is more characteristic of the uniformed culture in the Army than it is of the civilian workforce. CASAL results show that in comparison to uniformed leaders, smaller percentages of civilian leaders have mentors (see Figure 19). Overall, 29% of civilian leaders report currently receiving mentoring (from one or more mentors), compared to 62% of uniformed leaders. Similarly, about half of civilian leaders (53%) indicate they serve as a mentor to others, compared to 65% of uniformed leaders.

About one in three civilian leaders (29%) report having a mentor, while about half (53%) serve as a mentor to others.

About half of the civilian leaders who receive mentoring (53%) indicate their mentor is a person within their unit or organization, while 22% indicate their mentor is a person outside their chain of command. A majority of civilian leaders (59%) interact with their mentor weekly or more often; 26% report daily interaction with their mentor. Seventy percent of the civilian leaders who receive mentoring indicate the relationship has had a large or great impact on their development, which is a positive finding. Mentoring benefits civilian leaders in a number of ways. Most frequently cited include the mentor provides a sounding board for ideas (73%), provides first-hand knowledge and experience specific to their field (62%), informs mentee on visionary or big picture dynamics occurring in the Army (56%) and helps to set and maintain focus on developmental goals (50%).

**Figure 19. Percentages of Army Leaders that Engage in Mentoring.**



The 2013 Army Civilian Attitude Survey found that only 16% of civilian supervisors had received ‘a lot’ to ‘a great deal’ of help from a formal or informal mentor in planning their career path in the Army. Nearly half reported to have received ‘a little’ to ‘a moderate amount’ of help from a mentor, while 37% received no help (Civilian Personnel Evaluation Agency, 2013). While these results reflect mentoring for a specific purpose (i.e., career development), the findings further demonstrate the relatively low prevalence with which civilian leaders receive mentoring.

CASAL also found that of civilian leaders who do not receive mentoring, 27% indicate they have not found a suitable mentor (27%) while 24% indicate they have not had time to forge and maintain a mentoring relationship (24%). Civilian leaders who do not currently provide

mentoring to others also most frequently cite a lack of time available to do so (32%) and not having identified a person to mentor (32%). Further, comments also indicate that some civilian leaders do not mentor because they have not been sought out or asked to do so by potential mentees.

The 2013 CASAL also captured comments by civilian leaders who provide mentoring to determine ways to achieve more effective mentoring in the Army. Many comments indicated that units and organizations do not overtly support or promote a climate of mentorship. For some, mentoring was observed to focus on uniformed personnel with less emphasis directed toward civilians. Respondent suggestions for improving mentorship in the Army included allocating time to allow civilians to identify and engage with a mentor. The content of allocated mentoring time was not mentioned, nor were specific mechanisms for matching civilians with mentors. Other suggestions included offering training for potential mentors to develop the skills needed to be an effective mentor, and to increase the emphasis for mentoring within organizations.

### **3.3 Leader Development Methods and Initiatives**

Since 2009, CASAL has assessed and tracked trends on the relative contribution that various practices have on civilian leader development. Given a list of 11 practices or methods, leaders rate the positive impact each has had on their development as a leader. As findings on the positive impact of these practices are integrated into results discussions throughout this report, a brief overview and summary is provided here.

The 2011 CASAL was the last survey to collect data on the frequency of various leader development practices. More than three-fourths of civilian leaders reported frequently or very frequently engaging in opportunities to lead others (78%) while about half frequently learned from peers (55%) and trained on-the-job (47%). Practices that civilian leaders more often engaged in 'occasionally' or 'rarely' include self-development (52%), learning from superiors (54%), formal leader development programs (60%), and developmental counseling from a supervisor (67%).

The relative ranking of positive impact each practice has on civilian development has remained consistent across the past several years (see Figure 20 for 2013 results). Civilian leaders view less-formal methods of interpersonal learning as having a large or great positive impact on their development. Several of these practices relate to development that occurs through operational job experiences:

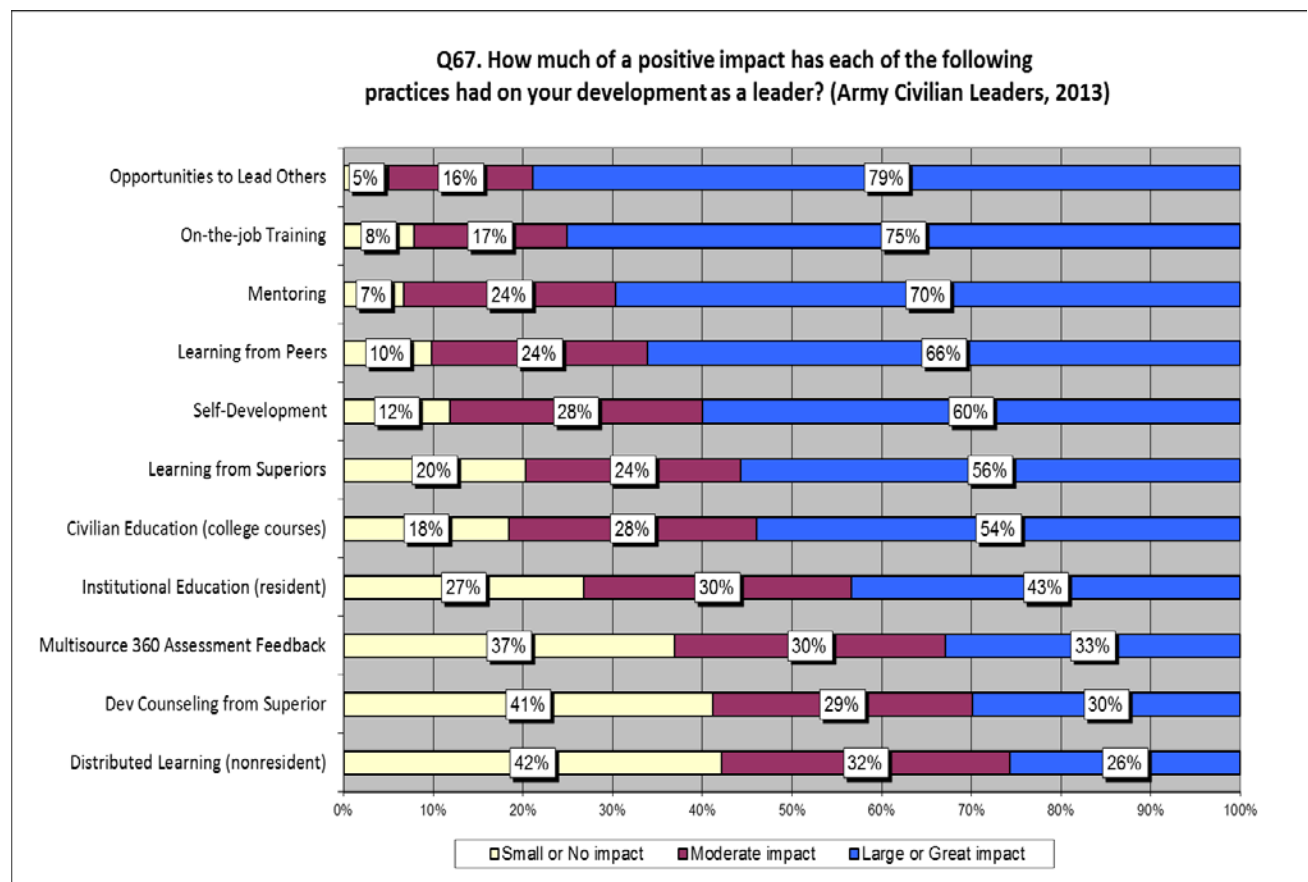
- Opportunities to lead others – 79%

- On-the-job training – 75%
- Learning from peers (e.g., observing, collaborating, receiving feedback) – 66%
- Learning from superiors – 56%

One-fifth or less of civilian leaders (5% to 20%) view these practices as having a small, very little, or no impact on their development. One special note is that the 2013 CASAL included expanded assessment on mentorship. Of civilian leaders who report having a mentor (about one in six), 70% indicate mentoring has had a large or great impact on their development.

Other development methods that are generally viewed as having a large or great impact by civilian leaders include self-development activities (60%) and civilian education (e.g., college courses) (54%). In comparison, smaller percentages of civilian leaders view formal institutional education (43%), 360-degree assessment feedback (33%), developmental counseling from one's supervisor (30%) and required DL (26%) as having a large or great impact on development.

**Figure 20. The Impact of Various Practices on the Development of Army Civilian Leaders.**



In addition to the contribution of broad development practices, the 2013 CASAL also assessed current Army programs that support leader development, career development and training.



These include the *America's Army – Our Profession* Program (AA-OP) and associated training materials; civilian career maps; the Army's Multi-Source Assessment and Feedback program (Army 360/MSAF); and three web-based portals that serve as online resources for Army leaders: the Virtual Improvement Center (VIC), Army Career Tracker (ACT), the Army Training Network (ATN).

### The America's Army – Our Profession Program

The *America's Army – Our Profession* "Stand Strong" Program was established in FY14 to enhance understanding of the five essential characteristics of the Army Profession; the certification criteria for Army Professionals; and the principles of the Army Ethic as described in Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 1, Chapter 2. The intent of this program is to develop a shared professional identity, motivate ethical conduct, and drive character development for Soldiers and Army civilians. This program reinforces trust among Army Professionals and with the American people, inspires honorable service, strengthens stewardship of the Army Profession and enhances esprit de corps. The Center for the Army Profession and Ethic (CAPE) has fielded education and training materials (including doctrine, pamphlets, videos, brochures, and lesson plans available online) to assist Army leaders in executing this program (The FY14 America's Army-Our Profession "Stand Strong" Program information paper, 2013).

Results show strong agreement among managers and first line supervisors that the Army is a profession (94% and 92%, respectively), and a majority report it is important to them that they be referred to as professionals (92% and 88%, respectively). Further, 73% of managers and 63% of first line supervisors believe they have a high or very high understanding of the essential characteristics of the Army Profession (i.e., Trust, Military Expertise, Honorable Service, Esprit de Corps and Stewardship), while one in four has some understanding of these characteristics (21% and 29%, respectively).

A majority of civilian leaders agree the Army is a profession. However, civilian leader awareness of the *America's Army-Our Profession* program is low.

Civilian leader awareness of the *America's Army – Our Profession* Program (AA-OP) is low. At the time of the 2013 CASAL data collection (November-December 2013), 16% of civilian leaders indicated they were aware of the program (compared to 26% of active duty uniformed leaders). Eight percent of civilian leaders indicated their unit or organization has sponsored or conducted training on the AA-OP program, though 45% were not sure. Similar levels of engagement in supporting or conducting training related to the Army Profession were observed in the 2012 CASAL (7% of civilian leaders).

For the civilian leaders who conducted or engaged in AA-OP training in 2013, 41% report the training had a moderate, large or great impact on their organization (e.g., climate, resilience, readiness, morale), while 59% report the training had a small, very little or no impact. Thirteen percent of civilian leaders indicate they or their organization have used CAPE training materials (e.g., video simulations, case studies, Master Army Profession and Ethic Trainer). Of users, 64% rate these materials as effective for helping to achieve training objectives (10% ineffective). In comparison, 24% of active duty uniformed leaders report having used CAPE training materials, of which 72% rate the materials effective.

### Civilian Career Maps

Army civilian career maps provide a standardized framework and career enhancing information to individuals and managers for the professional development of the Army Civilian Corps. The maps serve as the professional blueprint for a successful civil service career while providing information and guidance for advancement. The information provided in career maps is intended to serve as a guideline to Army civilians, and is not intended to imply that a series of training initiatives will automatically lead to promotion or advancement to a higher level.

Sixty-nine percent of civilian leaders are familiar with civilian career maps though only 25% report having accessed and used them (including 29% of managers and 23% of first line supervisors). Since 2011, CASAL results show inconsistent trends in the awareness, usage and perceived effectiveness of civilian career maps. The general pattern of results shows that usage has increased, from 18% in 2011 to 25% in 2013. Of civilian leaders who have accessed and used civilian career maps, 53% indicate they have been effective or very effective in helping them plan career development (only 14% rate them ineffective). The 2013 results are consistent with those observed in 2011 (48% effective) and more favorable than results from 2012 (37% effective).

### The Army 360/MSAF Program

The Army 360/MSAF program provides uniformed and civilian leaders a validated 360-degree approach to garnering feedback from superiors, peers, and subordinates, and comparing that feedback to the leader's self-assessment on a variety of leadership behaviors based on the Army Leadership Requirements Model (ADP 6-22). One of the major goals of the program is to increase leaders' self-awareness of their abilities and to help them improve their leadership. The program features: individual and

Three-fourths of civilian leaders (76%) rate their MSAF experience as effective for making them more aware of their strengths and development needs.

unit-level feedback reports; confidential and anonymous feedback from others; developmental resources available online (i.e., the Virtual Improvement Center); at no cost to the user (other than time); and dedicated support staff. The program is complemented by a professional coaching component whereby MSAF participants interact with a coach (in person, via telephone, or via e-mail) to receive assistance in interpreting their feedback report; in creating an individual leadership development plan (ILDLP); and suggestions on resources and activities for developing their leadership skills.

Overall, 16% of civilian leader respondents reported having been assessed through the Army MSAF program at some point in their career. An additional 13% indicate they have participated in MSAF by assessing someone else. Three-fourths of civilian leaders that were assessed (76%) rate the program effective for making them more aware of their strengths and developmental needs. Smaller percentages of civilian leaders rate MSAF effective for improving their leadership capabilities (60%) and for improving their unit or organization (49%). As noted previously, of civilian leaders who have received multi-source assessment feedback (any program), 63% indicate the experience had a moderate, large or great impact on their development.

#### Virtual Improvement Center

The Virtual Improvement Center (VIC) is a web-based portal accessible through the Army MSAF website that offers a collection of self-development resources. The VIC enables leaders to target and improve their specific developmental needs (identified through their MSAF feedback interpretation) or interests by engaging in digital resources for development. Current VIC resources include videos, digital versions of leadership handbooks, training aids, and simulations and interactive media instruction (IMI) tailored to the Army Leadership Requirements Model (ADRP 6-22). Descriptions of the resources available through the VIC are presented in the reference *Virtual Improvement Center (VIC) Catalog: A Guide to Leadership Development Materials* (Center for Army Leadership, 2012).

Results of 2013 CASAL show that awareness and usage of the VIC continues to be very low among civilian leaders. Three percent of civilian leaders report having accessed and used the VIC, while one-fourth (27%) have heard of it but have not accessed it. Of the small number of civilian leader CASAL respondents who report having accessed and used the VIC (n = 82), most (73%) rate it as effective or very effective for improving their leadership capabilities. These findings show no change since 2012 and continue to present great opportunity to increase awareness and usage of the VIC among civilian leaders.

### Army Career Tracker

The Army Career Tracker (ACT) is a web-based portal designed to change the way training, education and experiential learning support is provided to Army enlisted members, officers, civilians, and their leaders. Users can search multiple education and training resources, monitor career development and receive advice from their leadership. This portal allows users to track progress on Individual Development Plan (IDP) goals; view skill and competency career progressions across multiple career maps; search training catalogs and educational resources; and connect with peers through My Journal knowledge collaboration. The system also provides an unofficial “lifelong learning transcript” that represents the accumulation of all assignment, training, and education accomplishments by the user (TRADOC/INCOPD, 2011).

Forty-two percent of civilian leaders have accessed and used the ACT, an increase from 33% in 2012 and 9% in 2011. In 2013, this includes 44% of managers and 40% of first line supervisors. Of civilian leaders who reported having used the ACT portal in 2013, only about half (48%) rate it effective at providing a single point of access to career development information. Thirty-eight percent rate it neither effective nor ineffective and 14% rate it ineffective. While usage of the ACT by civilian leaders has increased over thirty percent since 2011, ratings of effectiveness have declined slightly (48% effective in 2013 compared to 54% in 2011-2012).

### Army Training Network

The Army Training Network (ATN) is a web-based portal that serves as the Army’s single source for training management processes. The portal relies on direct input from users to provide ATN the latest in digital tools and training management best practices from the field. Through ATN, Army leaders collaborate and share the most current training management doctrine, processes, and products. (Army Training Network information paper, 2012). Recent updates to the portal have streamlined access and sped up information delivery. Features include direct access to unit training management information and the “What’s Hot” in training section that provides a quick way to review current issues.

The 2013 CASAL found that 22% of civilian leaders (24% of managers and 20% of first line supervisors) have accessed and used the ATN, while 42% have heard of it but have never used it. Reported usage by civilian leaders shows no change since 2012. Ratings for the ATN’s effectiveness in providing civilian leaders with relevant resources are moderately favorable. Of civilian leaders who have accessed and used the portal, more than half rate ATN effective at providing resources for planning and executing self-development (61%), unit training (59%) and

unit leader development (51%). No more than 13% of civilian users rate ATN ineffective for supporting the planning and execution of these three practices.

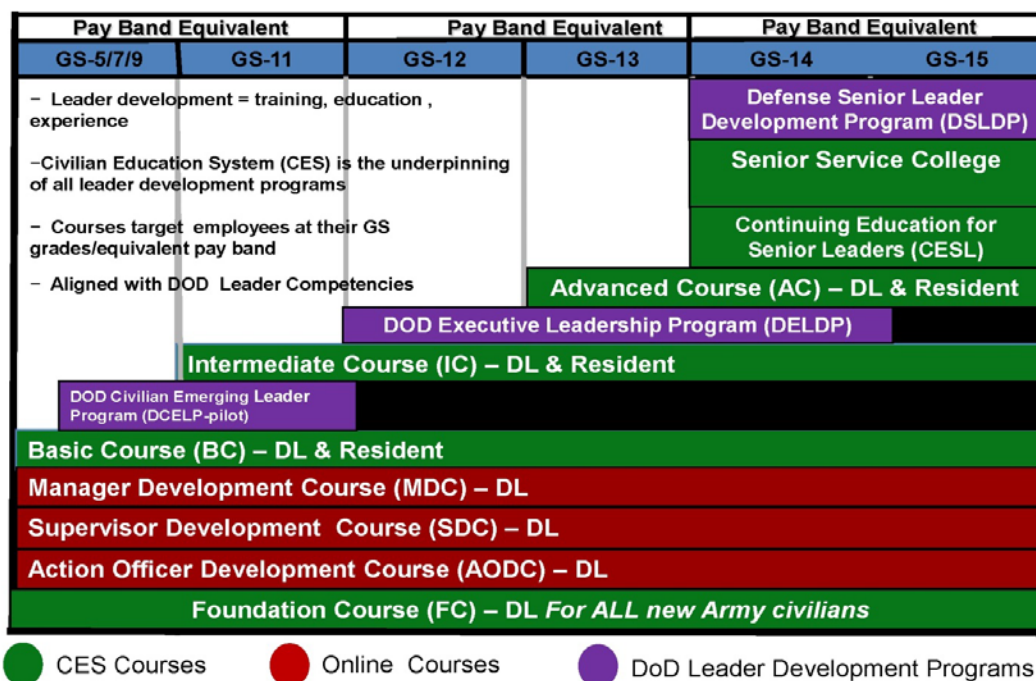
### 3.4 Civilian Education System (CES)

The Civilian Education System (CES) provides Army civilians progressive, sequential leader development training and education. Army Regulation 350-1 (2011) states the CES will “prepare agile and innovative Army civilians who can lead during times of change and uncertainty; are prepared for the rigors of service as multi-skilled leaders; and are armed with the values, skills and mindset to serve as competent, resilient supervisors and managers.

Two-thirds of civilian managers and supervisors report having completed a current Army civilian leader development course.

Figure 21 displays a graphical depiction of the Civilian Leader Development Program. CASAL assesses CES and online courses associated with pay band equivalent GS-5 to GS-13.<sup>14</sup> Sixty-four percent of the 2013 CASAL civilian sample reported having attended one of these courses in their career. The results discussed in this section reflect ratings by civilian leaders who completed a course between 2012 and 2013. Given the size of participant samples for each course, results do not include comparisons between years of course completion.

**Figure 21. Overview of Army Civilian Leader Development.**



<sup>14</sup> The Action Officer Development Course (AODC) DL was not assessed by the 2013 CASAL.

## Supervisor Development Course

The Supervisor Development Course (SDC) provides military and civilian supervisors and managers of Army civilians the administration skills for management and basic supervision. The SDC is conducted via distributed learning (DL) and contains lessons on topics mandated by the National Defense Authorization Act of 2010, spanning from workforce planning and merit system principles to performance management. Topics specific to leadership outcomes include creating an engaging work environment, leading change, and coaching, counseling and mentoring. The SDC is required for all new supervisors of Army civilians and must be completed within one year of placement in a supervisory position. The SDC is also required for supervisors as refresher training every three years, and is available to all Army employees as self-development. Given the nature of the SDC as both mandatory and recurring refresher training, the results are discussed here separate from other CES and DL course findings.

Seventy-nine percent of civilian managers and first line supervisors surveyed by the 2013 CASAL had completed the SDC (21% report they had not). In comparison, 46% of active duty uniformed leaders who supervise civilians completed the SDC (54% report they had not). About one in three of these civilian leaders (36%) have taken the course more than once (i.e., as refresher training), compared to 29% of uniformed leaders. The 2013 CASAL captured modest ratings about SDC from civilian and military leaders who recently completed the course (see Table 7). While a majority agrees the course is relevant to their current job (71% - 76%), less than half rate the SDC as effective at improving their leadership capabilities (43% - 49%). Both civilian and uniformed leaders indicate what they learned in the course was useful to some degree. Forty-six percent of civilian leaders and 41% of uniformed leaders rate what they learned from the SDC as being 'of considerable use or extremely useful' while nearly equal percentages (42% and 40%, respectively) indicate what they learned was 'of some use'.

**Table 7. Ratings for Supervisor Development Course by Recent Graduates (2012-2013).<sup>15</sup>**

| <b>Supervisor Development Course (SDC)</b>                                 | <b>Civilian Managers and<br/>First Line Supervisors<br/>N = 2,516</b> | <b>Active Duty<br/>Uniformed Leaders<br/>N = 539</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Agreement content of the course is relevant to<br/>current job</b>      | 76%                                                                   | 71%                                                  |
| <b>Effectiveness of course at improving leadership<br/>capabilities</b>    | 49%                                                                   | 43%                                                  |
| <b>What was learned is 'of considerable use' or<br/>'extremely useful'</b> | 45%                                                                   | 41%                                                  |

<sup>15</sup> Analyses for the Supervisor Development Course included 2,516 civilian leaders and 539 active duty uniformed leaders. Participants completed SDC between 2012 and 2013.

## CES Course Ratings

Civilian leaders who recently completed CES assessed their course experience, the quality of the education received, and the usefulness, relevance and effectiveness of what they learned for their current duties.<sup>16</sup> Table 8 presents results for civilian courses as rated by recent graduates.<sup>17</sup> A positive finding is that the quality of education received through CES continues to be viewed favorably by most civilian leaders who complete the courses. Two-thirds or more rate the quality of the education received through the courses as ‘good’ or ‘very good.’ The exception is the Foundation Course which is the introductory DL course for all new Army civilians; only 60% of recent graduates rate the Foundation Course quality as good or very good. Across CES offerings, about half of civilian leaders indicate what they learned in their course was ‘of considerable use/extremely useful’ (52%) while more than one-third indicate it was ‘of some use’ (37%).

**Table 8. Ratings for Civilian Courses by Recent Graduates (2012-2013).<sup>18</sup>**

|                                        | Quality of Education Received (% Good or Very Good) | Agreement course content was up to date with COE | Effectiveness of course at challenging learner to perform at higher level | Effectiveness of course at improving learner leadership capabilities |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Foundation Course (FC) DL              | <b><u>60%</u></b>                                   | 76%                                              | <b><u>37%</u></b>                                                         | <b><u>37%</u></b>                                                    |
| Basic Course (BC) Resident & DL        | 72%                                                 | 72%                                              | <b><u>65%</u></b>                                                         | <b><u>63%</u></b>                                                    |
| Intermediate Course (IC) Resident & DL | 77%                                                 | 77%                                              | <b><u>66%</u></b>                                                         | <b><u>60%</u></b>                                                    |
| Manager Development Course (MDC) DL    | 76%                                                 | 81%                                              | <b><u>55%</u></b>                                                         | <b><u>59%</u></b>                                                    |
| Advanced Course (AC) Resident & DL     | 73%                                                 | 80%                                              | <b><u>65%</u></b>                                                         | <b><u>56%</u></b>                                                    |

<sup>16</sup> The 2013 CASAL assessed the Manager Development Course (MDC), an online course, with the same items as the four CES courses. Results for the MDC are presented along with results of the CES courses in this section.

<sup>17</sup> Percentages that are bolded and underlined in Table 8 represent areas within civilian courses that received favorable ratings below 67% (e.g., agreement, effectiveness, or good/very good quality).

<sup>18</sup> CES course-level analyses included the following samples of civilian respondents by course: Foundation Course – 266; Basic Course – 185; Intermediate Course – 199; Advanced Course – 150. Analyses for the Manager Development Course included 393 civilian leaders. Participants completed their course between 2012 and 2013. Respondents graduating from these courses represent the following percentages of all graduates for 2012 and 2013: 2% of FC, 6% of BC, 11% of IC, 42% of MDC, and 22% of AC.

A majority of civilian leaders agree their most recent CES course was up to date with the current operating environment at the time they attended. No more than 8% of civilians rating any course indicate disagreement that the content was current. The level of rigor or challenge in CES continues to be a potential area for improvement. Nearly two-thirds of graduates from courses that include a resident phase (i.e., BC, IC and AC) rate the course effective at challenging them to perform at a higher level. In comparison, smaller percentages of civilians that completed (entirely) DL courses (FC and MDC) rate them as effective in this regard. Across these courses, 51-63% of course graduates agree that activities and activity assessments were sufficiently challenging to separate high performers from low performing students.

A positive finding for CES courses with a resident phase is the level of favorable ratings toward the effectiveness of instructors and faculty. A majority of recent graduates of the Basic Course (70%), Intermediate Course (82%) and Advanced Course (71%) agree that course instructors, faculty and staff set an appropriate example by modeling doctrinal leadership competencies and attributes. Similarly, recent graduates of these three courses agree that instructors and faculty provided them with constructive feedback on their leadership capabilities (66%, 77% and 66%, respectively).

A majority of instructors, faculty and staff at courses with a resident phase set an appropriate example and provide effective feedback on leadership capabilities.

Civilian courses have specified learning objectives to enhance civilian skills in leadership, supervision and/or management. Several topics and learning outcomes align with the core leader competencies described in ADP 6-22. For example, intended outcomes of the Basic Course include improvement in leading small teams, communicating effectively, and developing, coaching and counseling subordinates. The Intermediate Course aims to enhance learner abilities to lead people, manage resources, develop a cohesive organization, and increase civilian abilities to be flexible and resilient while the accomplishing mission. The Manager Development Course enhances civilian abilities to manage work and lead people, and focuses on communication, problem-solving and decision making skills. The Advanced Course includes content on developing a positive culture and cohesive organization, creating high performing teams and managing resources. Throughout the progression of courses, common themes in the content areas include development of the competencies *Leads Others*, *Communicates*, *Creates a Positive Environment*, *Stewardship of the Profession*, *Develops Others*, and *Gets Results*, among others.

CASAL findings continue to show that, overall, civilian leaders hold moderately favorable views regarding the effectiveness of courses for improving their leadership capabilities. A majority of recent graduates across the Basic Course, Intermediate Course, Manager Development Course



and Advanced Course (56-63%) rate their course effective at improving their leadership capabilities. Courses are rated ineffective in this regard by 8% to 14% of graduates. While ratings are not alarmingly unfavorable, these results show room for improvement as less than two-thirds of recent graduates view these courses as effective in positively improving their leadership capabilities.

The Foundation Course is geared toward new Army civilians at any grade or leadership level, and provides an introduction to the Army and orientation to being an Army civilian. While the course includes leadership concepts such as building teams, managing conflict and effective communication skills, this DL is not generally viewed as effective for improving learner leadership capabilities (37% effective, 20% ineffective).

### Content Relevance and Effectiveness

An important measure of the value of courses is the degree with which learners can transfer new knowledge and skills to their assigned duties. Research has found that the key factors driving transfer are participant motivation to learn followed by the environment in which the transfer is to take place (i.e., support received from superiors, opportunities to demonstrate skills) (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010). In other words, the perceived value of civilian courses is contingent in part upon the motivation of the learner and the relevance of the course to the job. If civilian leaders who complete courses do not perceive the course to be relevant to their jobs or assigned duties, this may indicate a mismatch between the content, the timing and/or the audience for a given course.

Table 9 displays CASAL results for civilian leader perceptions about the relevance and effectiveness of what they learned for their current job duties.<sup>19</sup> The Manager Development Course received the highest percentage of favorable ratings which indicates this course is well received by civilian leaders who complete it. The Basic Course and Intermediate Course are viewed as relevant and effective to civilian leader duties by about two-thirds of recent course graduates. The Advanced Course and Foundation Course received the lowest percentages of favorable ratings regarding course relevance and effectiveness for current duties.

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<sup>19</sup> Percentages that are bolded and underlined in Table 9 represent areas within civilian courses that received favorable ratings below 67% (e.g., agreement or effectiveness).

**Table 9. Percent of Favorable Ratings for Course Content Relevance and Effectiveness by Civilian Leaders (2012-2013).**

|                                        | Agreement course content was relevant to current job | Effectiveness of what was learned for current duties |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Foundation Course (FC) DL              | <u>59%*</u>                                          | <u>50%</u>                                           |
| Supervisor Development Course (SDC) DL | 76%                                                  | (not assessed)                                       |
| Basic Course (BC)                      | <u>65%</u>                                           | 68%                                                  |
| Intermediate Course (IC)               | 67%                                                  | 69%                                                  |
| Manager Development Course (MDC) DL    | 80%                                                  | 71%                                                  |
| Advanced Course (AC)                   | <u>64%</u>                                           | <u>61%</u>                                           |

\* **Note.** Percentages that are bolded and underlined represent areas within civilian courses that received favorable ratings below 67% (e.g., agreement or effectiveness).

### 3.5 Distributed Learning (DL)

The Army defines distributed learning (DL) as *technology-delivered training and education where the instructor and learners are separated by time or distance or both*. Required DL encompasses distributed training and education that is required by directive, policy, course completion requirements or other mandate and is not what is taken voluntarily.

The following discussion summarizes civilian leader attitudes toward required DL as assessed by the 2013 CASAL. When responding to the survey, CASAL participants were presented with the above definition of required DL. The survey did not otherwise prime participants to consider any specific DL courses, modules or trainings when making their ratings.

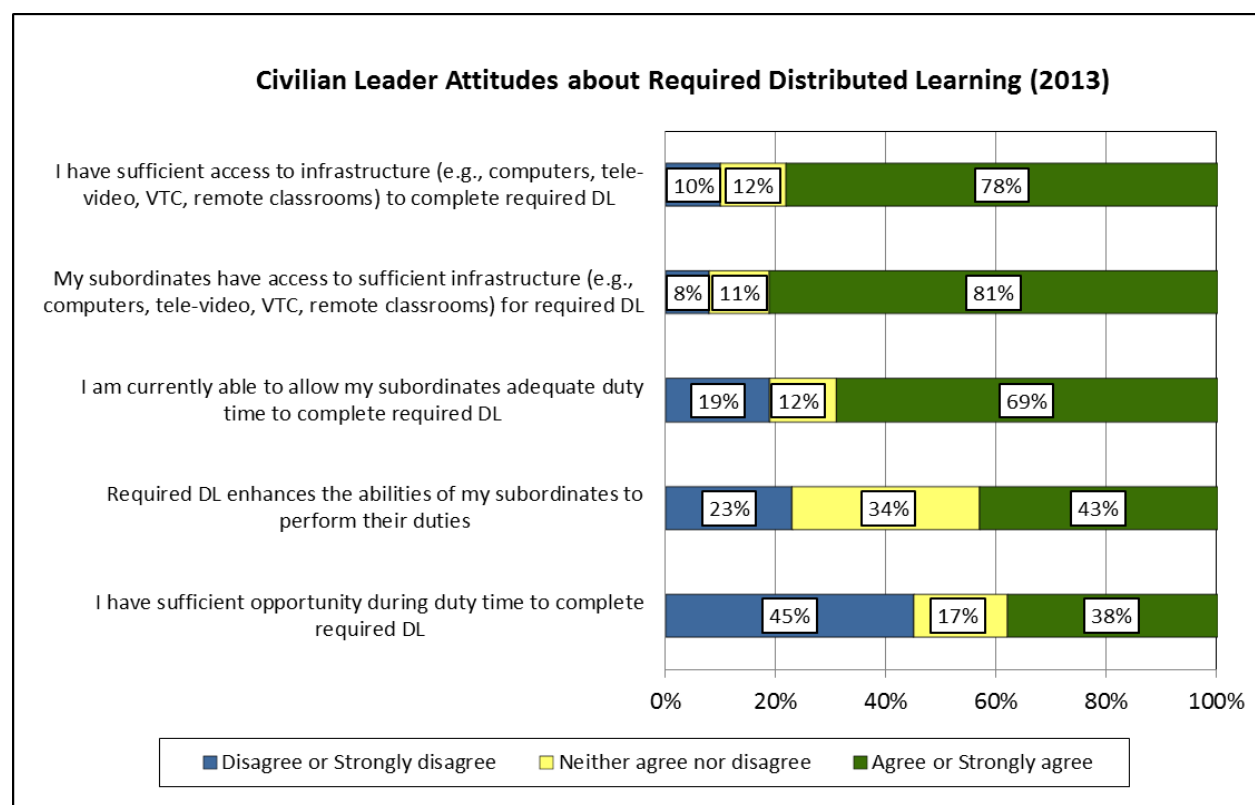
#### Attitudes about Required DL

Civilian leaders show moderate to weak agreement that required DL activities enhance the abilities of their subordinates to perform their duties. Only 43% of managers and first line supervisors agree DL is valuable in this regard, while almost one-fourth (23%) disagree. These findings are consistent with civilian leader attitudes about the impact of distributed learning on development. Twenty-six percent of civilian leaders believe DL has had a 'large or great' impact on their personal development while 42% indicate it has had a 'small, very little or no impact'. These results show steady trends over time.

Competing demands for duty time pose the biggest challenge to completing required DL.

The biggest challenge to completing required DL is time available. Overall, only 38% of civilian leaders agree they have sufficient opportunity during duty time to complete required DL, while 45% disagree. Civilian leaders are also challenged to allow adequate duty time for their subordinates to complete required DL, and one in five (19%) disagree they are able to do so. The most frequently cited reason for not allowing subordinate DL during duty time is that there are too many competing demands (80%). Smaller percentages of civilian leaders also indicate their superiors do not emphasize required DL as a priority (13%). A majority of civilian leaders agree that they themselves (78%) and their subordinates (81%) have access to sufficient infrastructure to complete required DL (e.g., computers, tele-video, VTC, remote classrooms).<sup>20</sup> Ten percent or fewer indicate technology access is currently an issue for themselves or their subordinates. A summary of 2013 CASAL results on required DL is presented in Figure 22.

**Figure 22. Army Civilian Leader Attitudes about Required DL.**

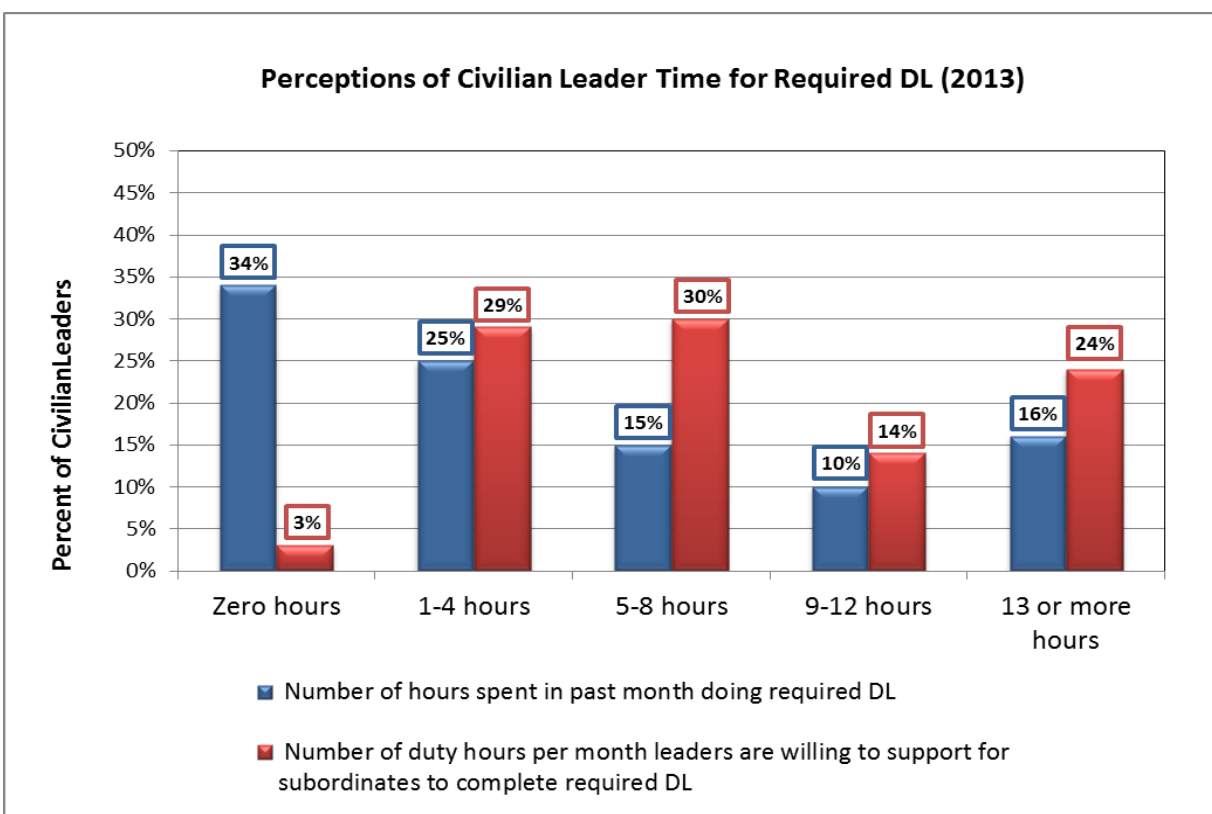


<sup>20</sup> Civilian leader agreement to the items 'I have sufficient access to infrastructure (e.g., computers, tele-video, VTC, remote classrooms) to complete required DL' and 'My subordinates have access to sufficient infrastructure (e.g., computers, tele-video, VTC, remote classrooms) for required DL' (78% and 81%, respectively) is significantly more favorable than active duty uniformed leader agreement (69% and 69%, respectively).

### Time Spent Completing Required DL

On average, civilian leaders estimate they spend about 9 hours per month completing required DL. The average number of hours reported by managers ( $m = 9.7$ ) is slightly higher than the average for first line supervisors ( $m = 8.7$ ). It is important to note that one-third of civilian leaders (34%) report they completed no required DL (i.e., zero hours) in the past month. Almost all civilian leaders are willing to allocate some amount of time each month for their subordinates to complete required DL (see Figure 23). Nearly one-fourth indicate they would support 13 or more hours per month for a subordinate to complete required DL, though this is likely situational based on competing demands of the organization.

**Figure 23. Army Civilian Leader Estimates for Time Devoted to Required DL.**



### **Summary of Findings on the Quality of Leader Development**

Civilian leaders favor the development they receive through operational job experiences, followed by self-development and institutional education. Opportunities to lead others and to train on-the-job are reported to have a large impact on development for a majority of civilian leaders. Interpersonal methods of civilian leader development continue to show room for improvement. Formal and informal performance counseling occur inconsistently and the perceived impact remains low. A majority of civilian leaders report their immediate superior

takes time to talk with them about how they are doing in their work, but fewer indicate their superior talks with them about how they could improve their duty performance and how to prepare for future assignments. Civilian leaders who take the time to engage subordinates in these types of discussions are viewed as effective in the competency *Develops Others*.

Civilian leader engagement in mentoring lags behind reported levels by uniformed leaders. Less than one-third (29%) of civilian managers and first line supervisors report they currently have a mentor, while about twice as many (62%) indicate they provide mentoring to others. Those who receive mentoring indicate the relationship has been impactful, while those who do not cite lack of time and inability to identify potential mentors/mentees as the main hindrances.

Civilian leader usage of the Army Career Tracker has increased steadily since 2011. The percentage of civilian leaders accessing and using Civilian Career Maps and the Army Training Network remain mostly unchanged. Civilian leaders who have been assessed through the MSAF program generally view the experience as effective for increasing their awareness of their strengths and developmental needs. Utilization of the Virtual Improvement Center by civilian leaders continues to show room for growth.

Sixty-four percent of civilian leaders surveyed have completed a current CES course at some point in their Army career. A majority with recent course experience view CES as providing a good quality education. Overall, most civilian leaders agree that courses are up to date with the current operating environment, though courses receive moderate ratings in their effectiveness for improving leadership capabilities. Instructors at resident courses are rated effective at modeling doctrinal leadership and to a lesser extent providing effective leadership feedback. The level of rigor or challenge posed by all courses shows room for improvement, particularly courses offered entirely via DL. A potential gap identified by CASAL results is that 36% of civilian managers and first line supervisors report never having taken any of the current courses offered. The DL portions of courses are available to all Army civilians as self-development. DL is a low cost and usually flexible method of self-development, and as the quality and relevance for many courses are viewed positively, there is potential to benefit a larger share of the civilian leader workforce with existing offerings. A way to promote self-development is to ensure civilian leaders at all levels know what DL and resident course offerings are available to them.

While civilian leaders report doing an average of 9 hours of required DL per month, one-third have not completed any DL in the past month (at the time of the survey). Time available and competing work demands pose the biggest challenges to completing required DL. Most managers and first line supervisors are willing to allocate some amount of subordinates' duty time for required DL (only 3% report they would support 0 hours per month) despite moderate agreement about the positive effect of DL for enhancing subordinates' abilities to perform their duties.

## ***Conclusions***

The quality of leadership among Army civilians is moderate to strong and remains relatively stable over the past five years. Civilian leaders get results, prepare themselves, make good decisions about the resources they manage, and demonstrate all the leader attributes, specifically expertise, confidence and composure, the Army values, technical knowledge and self-discipline. Leadership skills that show the most room for improvement include developing subordinates, building trust and building effective teams.

Army civilian leaders are committed to their teams and immediate work groups, view their assigned duties as important to their organization, and have confidence in the ability of their organization to perform its mission. These indicators of unit/organization confidence and commitment persist despite a decline in the overall level of morale. The downturn observed in 2013 shows that one in four civilian leaders is affected by low morale. The working environment continues to be generally conducive to civilian leaders' abilities to complete their tasks and missions. While a majority of managers and first line supervisors hold favorable attitudes toward organizational factors such as effective collaboration of team members and treating one another with respect, the stress from a high workload continues to challenge one out of three. Civilian leaders report moderate to high levels of trust in those with whom they work and interact. Operational climates tend to reflect favorable aspects of the mission command philosophy in practice (e.g., unit members enabled to determine how best to accomplish their work, encouraged to learn from honest mistakes).

Interpersonal methods of civilian leader development continue to show room for improvement. Just over half of civilian leaders are rated effective at developing their subordinates. Formal and informal performance counseling occurs inconsistently and the perceived impact on development for many remains low. Developmental interactions between superior and subordinate are occurring for some civilian leaders, but one in three indicates they are not. Increased day-to-day interactions in which leaders talk with their subordinates about how they are doing in their work, how they can improve their job performance and how they can prepare for future roles will benefit the ongoing development of civilian leaders. Mentorship from within or outside the organization is not filling the development gap, as only three in ten civilian leaders report having a mentor.

Civilian leaders favor the development received from operational job experiences and self-development. Two out of three civilian leaders have completed a current CES course at some point in their career, and about half rate institutional education as effective or very effective for developing them for higher levels of leadership or responsibility. Recent graduates view the

quality of the education received at CES as good or very good, though course effectiveness in improving leadership capabilities could be improved. Courses offered entirely via DL are rated lowest in terms of leadership improvement. Noted challenges associated with required DL include civilian leaders finding time in the duty day to complete it and its low perceived impact on enhancing subordinate abilities to do their jobs.

Several programs that support civilian leader development are effective but are generally under-utilized by civilian leaders. Tools like the Army Career Tracker (ACT) and Civilian Career Maps, which address civilian leader development from a career development angle, show an increase in awareness and usage since 2011. Participation in the Multi-Source Assessment and Feedback (MSAF) program and usage of available training materials offered in the Virtual Improvement Center (VIC) remain relatively low.

### ***Considerations for Improvement***

The *2013 CASAL Report of Main Findings* proposed several recommendations for improving leadership and leader development in the Army. Recommendations were derived through consideration of recurring problems, under-tapped opportunities and greatest risks. Several of the considerations are relevant to the improvement of civilian leadership and leader development, and are summarized here.

**Recurring problem.** Developing others continues to be done less frequently than recommended by regulations for counseling and as a required leadership responsibility. Developing others has a lower impact than desired. The percentage of leaders who receive informal feedback, have a mentor and participate in 360° assessments is not so high that these approaches compensate for shortcomings of developmental counseling.

#### **1. Improve the culture regarding civilian leader involvement in developing others.**

Only one-third of civilian leaders rate the developmental counseling they receive from their immediate superior as having a large or great impact on their development. Further, more than one-fourth only receive formal or informal performance counseling at rating time, while 14% indicate they never receive it. Informal interactions between superiors and subordinates on duty performance are not occurring for as many as one in three civilian leaders.

- a. Recommendation: Enhance one-on-one interactions between superiors and subordinates on individual duty performance. Leverage existing developmental materials to encourage a culture of informal counseling and development. Field and

- promote the new Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 6-22.1 to emphasize leader preparation and planning for counseling interactions with subordinates to increase its impact and effect. Increase awareness and usage of Virtual Improvement Center (VIC) materials that enhance the delivery of informal feedback (e.g., ‘Every Leader as a Coach’, ‘Seeking and Delivering Face-to-Face Feedback’ and ‘Supporting the Developing Leader’).
- b. Recommendation: Increase civilian leader propensity to seek development from leaders who are senior to them. Seeking development includes asking for coaching, counseling and performance feedback on current duties and performance, as well as seeking out mentorship to help prepare for future roles. Enhance civilian leader understanding of their responsibility for their own development. Promote a culture that emphasizes self-development by continuing to endorse and advertise resources for development.

**Under-utilized opportunity.** The operational assignment domain is where the greatest development of leadership occurs. Informal practices that occur in the operational domain have been consistently perceived to provide the greatest value for the development of civilian leaders, yet what and how development occurs is not codified and used in an intentional, systematic way. The Army pays attention to key developmental and broadening assignments but does not shape the conditions for individual development during them nor does it collect lessons learned or evaluate the degree development occurs. *Send them and they will learn* is an inefficient – if not flawed – principle.

## **2. Enhance opportunities for leaders to learn from operational job experience.**

CASAL findings have shown that factors with strong positive impacts on leader development include increased opportunities to lead with expanded responsibilities; more time to directly interact with others (superiors, peers and subordinates); and opportunities to operate in conditions that test one’s resilience, and apply knowledge and skills to new challenges.

- a. Recommendation: Design into existing task assignments opportunities for civilian leaders to learn from high impact developmental conditions. For example, unit leaders delegate challenging but appropriate responsibilities to subordinates and assign tasks with development in mind. Research has demonstrated the positive impact developmental job assignments have on enhancing leadership skills (McCall, 2004). As a starting point, a leader should be assessed to determine the ‘right’ level of challenge needed to promote self-reflection and development (Day, 2001). It is both appropriate and useful for civilian leaders to leverage developmental materials such as the *Commander’s Handbook for Unit Leader*



*Development*, which offers a sampling of applications and procedures to promote leader development through assessment and challenging job assignments (e.g., 'SOAR observation and assessment tool' and 'Assignment Demands Assessment').

- b. Recommendation: Integrate leader development practices into assigned duties. Civilian leader duties can be enhanced by integrating other leader development practices such as providing new opportunities to lead projects or tasks, assessing civilian leaders on doctrinal requirements for leadership, and providing formal and informal leadership feedback (including peer feedback). As an example, the handbook *Developing Leadership during Unit Training Exercises* outlines a methodology for deliberate and effective leadership observation and assessment. While concepts are presented in the context of field training situations, the approaches and techniques in this handbook are applicable to varied task and work settings.
- c. Recommendation: Employ more opportunities for civilian leaders to broaden their leadership skills outside of their traditional duties. Examples of broadening experiences include assignment to special task forces, cross-training across organizations, opportunities to job shadow leaders, and other activities suitable for Army civilians to gain skills through job enrichment.

**High threat.** The greatest threat in the performance of leadership may be complacency given positive ratings on the quality of leadership, the demonstration of attributes, and the performance of leadership skills. The areas of highest average ratings may also be those which become most dangerous when they are lacking or fail (e.g., lack of adherence to Army values, confidence/arrogance, lack of desire to learn, and negative leadership behaviors). Lower quality leadership skills across the force are also important to target for improvement, such as the alignment of purpose across organizations.

### **3. Increase leadership skill improvement across the three leader development domains.**

- a. Recommendation: Integrate coverage of influence strategies such as inspiration into existing civilian course content on leadership. One approach is to increase the focus on contemporary inspirational methods of leadership. Fifty-seven percent of civilian leaders are rated effective at using *inspiration* as a method of influence, while 21% are rated ineffective (overall, ranked in the bottom two of the nine methods of influence). Leaders that are effective in using *inspirational appeals* gain commitment from followers when accomplishing tasks and missions. CASAL results indicate that, of the influence methods, inspiration has the strongest relationship with effective leadership. Transformational leadership (Bass, 1985) is an approach that inspires

- followers by making them aware of the importance of their contributions to the end goals or outcomes, convinces them to put aside their own personal interests for the team or larger organization, and increases their engagement and commitment within the team. Inspiration is associated with a leader's ability to articulate a clear and appealing vision, explain how the vision can be attained, act confidently and optimistically, express confidence in others, use actions to emphasize key values, lead by example, and empower followers to achieve a vision. Becoming more skilled in this set of behaviors is also a way to promote mission command.
- b. Recommendation: Continue to increase civilian leader awareness and understanding of the mission command philosophy. Regardless of leadership level, civilian and uniformed leaders operate within the Army's intent for this philosophy. Civilian leaders must therefore understand their role in exercising disciplined initiative under conditions of greater decentralized decision making. Integrate appropriate instruction into CES and other training modules.
  - c. Recommendation: There are numerous resources currently available to all Army leaders to improve their leadership skills, including the MSAF program's Virtual Improvement Center (VIC), the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic's training materials, and the FORSCOM Leader Development Toolbox. However, CASAL results indicate online resources for leader development are currently underutilized. The lowest rated leadership competencies and attributes all involve skills that can be learned and improved. Address readiness to learn and enhance leadership by promoting and using existing training materials. There are specific leadership skills that can improve individual and organizational capabilities, such as: *Building effective teams, dealing with unfamiliar situations, balancing subordinate needs and mission, innovation, interpersonal tact – recognizes how actions impact others, using appropriate influence methods matched to individuals involved and situational differences, assessing developmental needs, removing work barriers, and using appropriate communication techniques.*

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